THE METHODIST CHURCH AND THE PRESENT RACIAL CRISIS:

A STUDY OF RESPONSE AND ACTION

A thesis submitted to the Division of
Theological Studies in the Graduate School of
Drew University in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

William Wright May

Drew University

Madison, New Jersey

1967

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Chapter I. INTRODUCTION 1

PART I. NEGROES AND THE METHODIST CHURCH: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE 12

Chapter II. THE CONTROVERSY LEADING TO SEPARATION 19

Chapter III. THE NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO UNION 83

Evaluation of the Union of 1939 107

Chapter IV. THE DISPUTE OVER THE CENTRAL JURISDICTION 113

The Emergence of the Problem 116
The Initial Response to the Problem: Amendment IX and the Commission of 70 . . 126
1964: Ratification of the Voluntary Approach to the Problem 163
The Role of the Central Jurisdiction 189
The Place of Negroes in the Methodist Church . 205

PART II. THE RESPONSE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH TO THE PRESENT RACIAL CRISIS AS MEDIATED THROUGH THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH . . . 214

Chapter V. THE RESPONSE OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCES 215

The Annual Conference Questionnaire 220
Eight Selected Annual Conferences 232
1946-1954 236
1955-1960 251
1961-1965 281
Evaluation of the Response Mediated through the Annual Conferences. 317

Page

Chapter VI. THE RESPONSE OF THE BISHOPS 329

The Understanding of the Bishops in the 1950's 331
The Statements of Individual Bishops in the 1960's 350
The Actions of the Bishops. 377
The Collective Responses of the Bishops. . . . 392
Evaluation of the Response of the Bishops . . . 404

Chapter VII. THE RESPONSE OF THE BOARDS AND AGENCIES 410

The Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs 415
Woman's Division. 440
Board of Missions 457
  1. The Section of Home Fields 459
  2. The Section of Church Extension . . . 468
Selected Boards and Agencies 478
  1. The Board of Education 479
  2. Board of Evangelism 488
  3. Board of Publication 492
  4. Board of Pensions 496
  5. Board of Hospitals and Homes 499
  6. Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations 501
  7. Racial Witness Relief Fund 508
  8. Judicial Council 511
Evaluation of the Response of the Boards and Agencies 520

PART III. CONCLUSION

Chapter VIII. CONCLUSION 525

The Importance of History for the Present Response 527
The Methodist Church and Race: Response and Action 536
The Church and Social Action 560

Page

APPENDIX A 568
APPENDIX B 569
BIBLIOGRAPHY 570

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

This study of The Methodist Church and Race, focused on a Church and a social problem, is intended to illuminate the general problem of the Church and social action. Since World War II, the relation between Negroes and whites has been the predominant domestic social problem in the United States. Every major church body has added its voice to the declaration of governmental agencies and civil rights organizations that patterns of prejudice and discrimination are a violation of human rights. The churches have called for change and have taken various actions to bring about that change. The prominence of the problem and the widespread response of the churches to it combine to provide a fruitful field for analyzing the relation of the Church and social action. The latter relationship is much debated because there is dispute within church bodies over the proper relation, because there is disagreement among commentators over how church bodies do in fact relate to social problems, and because the problem is often treated in a manner that includes a wide variety of church bodies responding to diverse social problems.

This study is designed to explore the nature of the response of one denomination to a major social problem and the factors that have shaped that response in order to further discussion of the Church and social action question on a more solid basis. The selection of The Methodist Church is compelling for a number of reasons: It is a national body with a church in nearly every community; it has strong representation in every geographical area; it has a history of internal strife over Negroes which played a large part in its Separation and Union; and it has the largest Negro membership of any of the predominantly white Protestant denominations. These factors are significant in that they have produced an important internal problem for the denomination as well as having affected its external response to the problems faced by the nation. The internal problem is especially important for an adequate understanding of factors that affect denominational response to social problems. The race relations problem, of course, is of such magnitude that it touches the lives of all Americans, but some denominations, lacking a significant southern constituency and having only a handful of Negro members, well scattered, have spoken forthrightly and have committed large resources without threatening the life patterns of members in any significant way. This does not minimize the importance of actions that have been taken by such bodies, but the absence of any essential challenge to one's own pattern of life, or to the structure of one's denominational structure or membership, removes an element of participation that is crucial to a full discussion of the Church and social action. It is true that recently northern cities have been the cite of major controversy, but the majority of national attention and legislation has been directed at patterns existing in the South.

The Methodist Church may be viewed as an association of members. It is also a social institution embodying certain values and possessing a highly organized structure designed to carry on the work of the denomination. The study of the response of The Methodist Church to the present racial crisis in its fullest sense would require an analysis of the response of individual members and clergymen, of informal groups, of congregations, and of all the succeedingly larger conference relations which bind Methodists together into the denomination. The focus of this study is on the response of Methodists as mediated through specific organizational levels and leaders which have been given authority to represent Methodism by designing and carrying out programs in accordance with Methodist beliefs and goals. Specifically, we are going to analyze the response of the General Conference, selected annual conferences, the bishops, and the boards and agencies of the Church. The focus is on the response of The Methodist Church as an organized body. This necessarily leaves out much that has been done at the congregational level and by individual members. The limitation of focus is made on two bases: (1) information on congregational and individual response is generally unavailable, and (2) the debate on the Church and social action in its present form most often centers on the larger organized structure.

The Methodist Church is a product of a union of three bodies, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church, consummated in 1939. The Union brought together three independent bodies that had once been one. Problems related to Negro-white relations played a primary role in the separation of the two largest bodies, the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and Negro-white relations played a large part in shaping the form of the Church instituted at the time of Union. Consequently, any discussion of The Methodist Church and the present racial crisis must be put in the framework of an understanding of the resolution of previous confrontations over race in the Church and the way in which these past events have affected present actions.

To facilitate discussion of the historical internal confrontation over Negro-white relations and the analysis of the response to the present racial crisis as mediated through representative bodies and elected leaders, this work has been divided into three major sections. The first section is divided into three chapters, dealing in turn with the conflict over slavery that played such a large part in the Separation of 1844, the relation of race to negotiations leading to Union in 1939, and the growing dispute within the Church since Union over the racially organized Central Jurisdiction. This section centers on the relation of present deliberations to Separation and Union. The second section is devoted to an analysis of the nature of the response of Methodism to the present racial crisis as mediated through the annual conferences, the bishops, and the boards and agencies. The three chapters in this section are designed to present a general picture of the kinds of responses that have been made by the various representative agencies or individuals. The number of agencies and individuals scrutinized here is so vast that this section is intended to deal descriptively with selected annual conferences, the bishops, and important boards and agencies to provide some understanding of the type of response made by the Church without being exhaustive. In all cases, evaluation is centered on how well the responses formulated have helped implementation of the Church's two pronged goal of inclusiveness in Church and society. This goal, often stated, as the basic position of the Church, is of crucial importance for the whole study. The third section is the concluding chapter in which attention is focused on the importance of historical events for the present response; assertions that can be made about The Methodist Church as a denominational body confronting a social problem; and what can be said about the Church and social action on the basis of this study.

The extended time period and the broad range of Church bodies analyzed are necessary to a thorough understanding of how the Church has responded to the present racial crisis. Because of the wide purview of this work, certain delimitations need to be made to bring the mass of events and materials into the confines of one work. First, the time span requires limitation on sources used. The importance of the period from 1784 to 1939 for this work is that conflicts related to relations between the races played a central part in the Separation of 1844 and the Union of 1939. Many studies have been written about selected portions of this long period. In order to encompass this period in one section of this work, we have limited our attention almost exclusively to General Conference Journals, reports of special Commissions, and specialized studies dealing with these materials. Works that include debates and commentaries from the many journals, periodicals, and books available on events related to Separation and Union are cited where appropriate. During the long time span covered, The Methodist Church changed from a sect to a church. The change is important, but for the sake of this study we are considering The Methodist Church, and its various divisions, as one body throughout the entire period. Second, the wide range of conferences, church officials, and boards and agencies requires selectivity in materials used. There were 90 annual conferences in the continental United States in 1964, exclusive of special conferences such as the Indian Mission Conference, there were 46 active bishops, and over a score of boards, agencies, and special commissions. In order to bring this large number of bodies and officials into some concentrated perspective, attention has been centered on the specific kinds of action taken and the policies formulated to aid in the implementation of the Church's goal of inclusiveness in Church and society. Major attention here has been on the nature of the response as seen in types of action supported and attempted. Very little attention has been given to the results of action taken and little attempt has been made to report in detail the number of persons involved or the duration of particular responses. In many cases such information is not available. In other cases we have had to rely on correspondence which is a source of information that has only restricted utility. Further delimitation has been accomplished by selecting eight annual conferences with a representative jurisdictional and geographical spread. The annual conferences selected are The New York Conference, The New York East Conference, The Detroit Conference, The Rock River Conference, The Southern California-Arizona Conference, The North Alabama Conference, The North Georgia Conference, and The Western North Carolina Conference. In all but one case, the conferences included a major city with a large Negro population, and in every case there had been a history of race relations problems. Three divisions of Church boards have been centrally involved in shaping and executing the response at the national level. These three divisions, the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs of the Board of Christian Social Concerns, the Section of Christian Social Concerns of the Woman's Division of The Board of Missions, and the National Division of the Board of Missions have been treated in some detail. In the case of the remaining boards and agencies, whose work all impinges on race in some fashion, attention has been focused on the types of action taken and policies formulated. The jurisdictional conferences have not been included as a special area of study because they only function effectively in the Southeastern, South Central and Central Jurisdictions. Certain jurisdictional conference actions have been included at several points.

Certain terms will be used throughout the work, and some definitions will help isolate the field of study: (1) Present racial crisis - this phrase refers to the conflict which emerged after World War II over the historic patterns of Negro-white relations in the United States. The crisis factor emerges out of the fact that an historic problem grew in the post-War period into the primary domestic problem confronting the nation. (2) Race, race problem, or race relations - In this work the word race, used in several recurring phrases, refers to Negroes or to Negro-white relations. This limitation is important since The Methodist Church works with many racial and ethnic groups in the United States and in other parts of the world. The analysis in this work does not apply to individuals or groups that are classified as other than Negro or white. (3) Response, or total response - This term refers to the variety of statements made and actions taken by the denominational bodies and officials studied in their attempts to establish a basic position for The Methodist Church and to move Church practice into line with the position taken. The basic goal of the Church is inclusiveness in Church and society, and that goal is used to measure the response of the variety of agents studied. (4) Action - This word is used generally to refer to commitment of personnel, financial expenditure, conferences held, or programs formulated to meet specific needs or to anticipate problems. However, making a public statement, as in the case of the Council of Bishops, may constitute an action, and action thus is used nearly synomously with response. Action is more often used to refer to isolated instances of statement or deed, and response is used, especially in the phrase total response, in the analysis or evaluation of actions in which the intention or degree of commitment may be involved.

The specific focus of this work, then, is on the response of The Methodist Church, in its denominational-organizational manifestation, to the present racial crisis. The work is specifically concerned with how the response has been shaped, what effect historical events have played in the present response, the form that the present response has taken, and an evaluation of the response made in relation to the problem faced and the resources available. This work combines historical, ethical, and sociological framework. The first section of the work is an historical analysis. The second section of the work is descriptive and analytical. Sociological and ethical analysis is done from the standpoint of the problems encountered, the basic commitment made, and the adequacy of the measures taken to fulfill the commitment and resolve the problems.

The wider focus of this work is the general problem of the Church and social action. The problem has two major dimensions. First, there is debate over what the proper role of the Church should be. Is it a social change agent that should use power, through the various denominational bodies and interdenominational organizations, or is it an association of members which has an affect on society through the actions of individual members? Second, there are a variety of analyses directed at what the role of the Church has been in regard to social issues. There are those who view the Church negatively as either non-functional or reactionary, there are those who view the Church positively as a conservor of values and traditions, and there are those who view the Church as a beneficent agent of social change. This work does not attempt to address the question of the proper nature of the Church in regard to social change. For the purposes of this study, the commitment of The Methodist Church to the attainment of inclusiveness in Church and the development of a variety of programs by conferences and boards and agencies is taken as prima facie evidence that the denomination intends to use its power to bring about social change. This work does contribute, however, to the discussion on what the Church's relation to social issues is in fact.

The discussion about the Church and social action too often uses "the Church" in such a way that it includes at least all Protestant bodies and at times includes Roman Catholics as well. There is too little attempt to isolate particular responses of denominational bodies. More important, there is too often no attempt to consider historical and sociological factors that may affect or determine the response of a particular denomination. One consequence of this kind of treatment is that statements about what the Church has done are often too general to have any significance for historical analysis. Another consequence is that discussion of what the Church ought or ought not to do often assumes polemical form that overlooks historical and sociological factors which may determine denominational response to any single issue. This study of The Methodist Church and race may help to illumine the necessity of more discrete comment and may sharpen the focus on factors that must be considered in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of any denominational response.

PART I.

Negroes and The Methodist Church: An Historical Perspective

The Place of Negroes within The Methodist Church today must be understood within a framework which includes the following factors: (1) a national body with large and extensive membership in all parts of the country; (2) the largest number of Negro members of any of the predominately white denominations, a factor intensified by the high proportion of this number living in the South; (3) a union, based upon decades of deliberation in which the place of Negroes was one of the two central issues, structured both to include the Negroes and to preserve the social pattern of segregation existing in the South at the time of the union in 1939 (a pattern shared in the North, but not supported openly by law and church), and (4) continuous debate and attempt to remove the structural segregation since the time of union. Moreover, an adequate appreciation of the contemporary situation requires an understanding of Methodist history in regard to slavery and the important place of the race issue in the negotiation leading to union.

One of the central factors in understanding the relation of The Methodist Church to the current racial crisis is the manner in which it has dealt with its internal race problem, the Central Jurisdiction. In 1939, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church united to form the Methodist Church. The Methodist Protestant Church does not directly concern us in this study because its withdrawal from the main body occured prior to the confrontation over slavery. Two major problems had to be overcome before the northern and southern divisions of the church could be united, and both problems centered on demands of the Church, South, put forth to preserve its integrity. The dispute that led to the separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1844 centered on the issues of church government and slavery. On both issues, the church in the South felt itself being pressured to accept the views of the church in the North, which had superior voting strength in the General Conference. The issue of church government, centered on the question of the authority of locally elected bishops over against the General Conference, was inextricably tied to the issue of slavery. The tensions in the church over the latter issue closely paralleled the tensions in the nation as the slavery controversy heightened in the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century.

After the separation, the Church, South, prospered for ninety-five years, during which time both major issues were resolved to its satisfaction. It gained its autonomy at the time of the separation, and officially severed relations with its colored members shortly after the Civil War. It did continue to give financial aid to the Negro church formed at that time. However, many of the colored members whose relation was severed from the Church, South, were enlisted to membership in the northern Church. The northern Church followed the victorious Army of the Union across the South, establishing churches, schools, and annual conferences. The product of these ventures, a sizeable body of southern Negroes enrolled in the northern Church, caused much of the conflict in the deliberations leading to Union in 1939.

At the time of Union in 1939, the two major issues were identical to those at the time of separation, that is, church government and the place of the Negro. Again, the two were inextricably intertwined. However, in 1939, the situation was vastly different, in that the Church, South, was an independent entity which had resolved these two issues for itself. Furthermore, the question of the place of Negroes had shifted from preservation of the slavery system to maintenance of legal, social, and institutional segregation of Negroes which had developed since the Civil War. The negotiations toward union beginning shortly after the Civil War were consistently shaped by the fact that the Church, South, was not going to bargain away what it had gained in separation. The resolution of both problems was the Central Jurisdiction.

The Plan of Union upon which The Methodist Church was formed in 1939 established six jurisdictions. Five of the jurisdictions were based upon geography and the sixth was comprised of Negro churches. These churches, located in thirty-four states, transcended the borders of area jurisdictions, and had as their common factor their Negro membership. The problem of church government was solved in part by the jurisdictional system which gave certain duties and powers to each geographical area. This effectively limited the power of the General Conference. More important, the process of amendment to the Constitution was made dependent upon substantial support from the Southeastern and South Central Jurisdictions, whose interests were protected by the jurisdictional structure. The problem of the place of Negroes was solved by keeping them in the Church, which the North demanded, but keeping them out of the effective life of the Church at local, conference, and jurisdictional levels, which the South demanded. The result is that the only relation of Negro and white Methodists living in the same town or state in the South is through the national organization. To some extent, of course, the same situation existed, and exists, in the North. As the change in race relations has come with increasing momentum in the last two decades, however, the jurisdictional structure has been used by the Southeastern Jurisdiction to prevent effective integration at the annual conference or local church level.

As we shall see, the Central Jurisdiction was indeed the price demanded and received by The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for its aggreement to unite with the Methodist Episcopal Church. Since 1939, ever increasing demands for dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction have been placed before the General Conference of The Methodist Church, the supreme legislative body. Definite action on the issue has been taken at the last three sessions of the General Conference. The approach to the problem as well as the solution adopted reveal much about both the denominational position and the internal problems the denomination faces as it attempts to deal with the race problem in the wider community. The treatment of race in its educational materials, the funds available for specific Methodist programs in racial problem areas, and the limited support it has given to the National Council of Churches' Commission on Religion and Race are varied types of response that have been affected by the internal race problem of the church. The extent of the effect will be weighed in Part II.

At the General Conference of 1964 a Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction was adopted. The essence of the Plan centers around the popularly described "two-step" procedure. In the first step, re-aligned Central Jurisdiction conferences are to be absorbed into the regional jurisdictions. This will signal the end, in fact, of the Central Jurisdiction. Considerable movement towards achievement of that goal has already occured. The second step, which involves integration of the Central Jurisdiction conferences into the conferences of the regional jurisdictions is the central area of contention now. This step includes participation of whites and Negroes in annual conference structures, the appointment of ministers without regard to race, and the integration of local churches. Dispute over step-two is the major area of conflict between Negroes and whites in the South today. Transfer and merger have occured across the North, and it has been accomplished in one case in the South Central Jurisdiction. However, segregation at the local church level is still a persistant fact in the North as well as the South, with some exception in the North.

Dissertations have been written and books have been published on the Separation of 1844 and the Union of 1939. No attempt has been made, however, to view the two events together in terms of their direct effect on the present controversy over the Central Jurisdiction, despite the fact that it is conceded that Negroes were a major issue in each case, first in terms of slavery, then segregation. Part I may be viewed as an effort to trace the effects of the Separation and the Union on the present.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONTROVERSY LEADING TO SEPARATION

The Separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church into the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, resulted in large part from the growing controversy over slavery in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The Separation was not legally consummated until it was confirmed by the federal courts in the early 1850s. However, it was at the General Conference of 1844 that the Separation was arranged and from that time the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, considered itself a separate body. The Church, South, was formally established at a special conference held in 1845. In order to understand the nature of the Separation, we must investigate the period spanning the years from 1780 to 1848. 1780 marks a beginning in that a strong position in regard to slavery was taken at that time. The General Conference of 1848 terminates real debate on the Separation, although disputes over property carried the issue into the federal courts for several years after 1848. In this chapter, we will trace the decline from a very strong anti-slavery position taken in 1780, 1784, and 1796, through the early part of the nineteenth century until a complete reversal is accomplished in 1840 when the General Conference of that year proclaims that the Church has no concern with the civil condition of slaves, nor is slaveholding any longer to be considered a bar to the ministry.

Methodism was a small, struggling body at the time of the revolution. In 1784, as the new nation was organizing and preparing for the expansion that was to begin in earnest at the turn of the century, Methodist membership was reported to have been about 15,000.[1] Up until the founding of American Methodism as a distinct entity in 1784, most, if not all of the ministers were sent from England. Many of them returned home during the Revolution, following Wesley's lead in opposing the fight for independence, and were replaced by men representing interests more indigenous to the budding nation. As the new church began to feel its way, however, it remained highly dependent upon Wesley's teachings in the formation of policy on many matters. Slavery was one issue on which the early pronouncements of American Methodism reflected Wesley's views.

The main source of Wesley's position is an essay, about fourteen pages long, entitled "Thoughts on Slavery," published in 1774. In that essay, he gives a brief statement on the lands from which the Negroes come, their life in their native lands, and a description of the criminal methods used to procure the slaves and the inhuman treatment that followed. Throughout the work, slavery is seen as violation of justice, mercy, truth, and nature, but it is nature that becomes the center of his argument. Wesley was concerned about the entire slave trade in which England was engaged, but saw the American variety as the most vile of all.[2] Since it is our purpose to trace the fortune of the position of the Church on slavery during this first sixty year period, we may benefit from several passages taken from Wesley's essay on the subject. In the following passages we see his most definitive denial of the legitimacy of slavery, his comment on African inferiority, the equation of men buyers with men stealers, brotherhood in the sight of God, and his argument for liberty for all on the basis of natural justice.

---

[1] Minutes of the Methodist Conferences Annually Held in America; From 1773 to 1813, inclusive. I (N.Y.: Hitt and Ware, 1813) p. 46.

> But waiving, for the present, all other considerations, I strike at the root of this complicated villany, I absolutely deny all slave holding to be consistent with any degree of natural justice.[3]
>
> (in reply to the charge that Africans are stupid). . . The inhabitants of Africa, where they have equal motives and equal means of improvement, are not inferior to the inhabitants of Europe; to some of them they are greatly superior. Impartially survey, in their own country, the natives of Benin, and the natives of Lapland; compare (setting prejudice aside) the Samoeids and the Angolans; and on which side does the advantage lie, in point of understanding? Certainly the African is in no respect inferior to the European. Their stupidity, therefore, in our plantations is not natural; other-

---

[2] In a letter to William Wilberforce, Wesley says, "Go on, in the name of God and in the power of his might, till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before it." Letter, February 24, 1791, as in Albert Outler (ed.), John Wesley, (N. Y.: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 86.

[3] "Thoughts on Slavery," 1774, The Works of the Reverend John Wesley, A.M., VI, John Emory (ed.), (Waugh and Mason, N. Y., 1832), p. 286.

> wise than it is the natural effect of their condition. Consequently, it is not their fault, but yours: You must answer for it, before God and man.[4]
>
> And this equally concerns every gentleman that has an estate in our American plantations; yea, all slave holders, of whatever rank and degree; seeing men buyers are exactly on a level with men stealers....[5]
>
> ...therefore, the blood of all these wretches who die before their time, whether in their country or elsewhere, lies upon your head. 'The blood of thy brother' (for, whether thou wilt believe it or no, such he is in the sight of Him that made him) 'crieth against thee from the earth,' from the ship, and from the waters....[6]
>
> Perhaps you will say, 'I do not buy any negroes; I only use those left me by my father.' So far is well; but is it enough to satisfy your own conscience? Had your father, have you, has any man living, a right to use another as a slave? It cannot be, even setting Revelation aside. It cannot be, that either war, or contract, can give any man such a property in another as he has in his sheep and oxen. Much less is it possible that any child of man should ever be born a slave. Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air; and no human law can deprive him of that right which he derives from the law of nature.
>
> If, therefore, you have any regard to justice, (to say nothing of mercy, nor the revealed law of God,) render unto all their due. Give liberty to whom liberty is due, that is, to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary choice.[7]

Wesley's clear position on slavery strongly colored the early statements by American Methodists. Thus in 1780, the Conference expressed an antislavery position in the following form,

---

[4] Ibid, p. 289.

[5] Ibid, p. 292.

[6] Ibid, p. 292.

[7] Ibid, p. 292.

> Does this Conference acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do to us or ours? --Do we pass our disapprobation on all friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom?[8]

The answer was in the affirmative, and in 1780 the first written rule of the Methodists on slavery said that travelling preachers who held slaves must set them free.

1784 marks the real beginning of American Methodism as an entity separate from English Methodism. The American Methodist Church was officially organized at the famous Christmas Conference in Baltimore in that year. The issue of slavery came up again and at this first conference the Church took the strongest position it was ever to take, a position that was to haunt it during the many deliberations on slavery in the next sixty years. In this session, they undertook to answer a question variously quoted as, "What method can we take to extirpate slavery?"[9] and what can be done "to extirpate this abomination from among us?"[10] The rule passed in response to this question called for full and entire emancipation of slaves in possession of members and prohibited "buying or selling the bodies and souls of men, women, or children with the intention of enslaving them."[11] The Conference went on to establish a number of explicit rules for handling violations of the position on slavery, which included the following,

---

[8] Minutes of the Methodist Conferences, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

[9] Daniel DeVinne, The Methodist Episcopal Church and Slavery, (New York: Francis Hart, 1857), p. 16.

[10] Dwight L. Culver, Negro Segregation in The Methodist Church, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 45.

> 3. In consideration that these rules form a new term of communion, every person concerned, who will not comply with them, shall have liberty quietly to withdraw himself from our society within twelve months succeeding the notice given as aforesaid; otherwise the assistant shall exclude him in the society.
> 4. No person so voluntarily withdrawn, or excluded, shall ever partake of the Lord's Supper with the Methodists, till he complies with the above requisitions.
> 5. No person holding slaves, shall in future be admitted to our society, or the Lord's Supper, till he previously complies with these rules concerning Slavery.[12]

This strong position was tempered by a proviso that the stipulations would be in effect consistent with state laws. A year's leeway was allowed in some cases where the laws prevented manumission and Virginians were allowed two years due to "special circumstances." Despite these qualifications, however, the 1784 position quite clearly stands in opposition to slaveholding and insists that membership be forfeited if one was not prepared to free his slaves. This strong position lasted something less than six months.

The position taken in 1784 at The Christmas Conference began to have repercussions in a number of places throughout the South as ministers made the position known and began to preach on it. Despite the fact that most of the delegates to the Conference that had formulated the position were Southerners, they had apparently failed properly to assess the mood in the South on the issue of slavery. Petitions were forthcoming demanding change, ministers were subjected to threats and violence, and pressures mounted for suspension of the rules. At the Baltimore Conference in June, 1785, the rules were suspended.[13] Although the rules were suspended, they were not rescinded, and 1785 marks the beginning of a controversy over the relation of the Church to the institution of slavery that lasted over half a century. By tracing the way in which the Church dealt with the issue and the position it finally took, we can move to the Separation and consideration of what the Separation meant to the place of Negroes in the Church, then and in subsequent time.

---

[11] Ibid, p. 45.

[12] DeVinne, op. cit., p. 16.

Our immediate concern is to trace the development of the position on slavery from 1784 to 1844. We recognize, of course, that during the sixty year period covered, there are many important changes occurring in both the Methodist Episcopal Church and the new nation. We are focusing on the conflict on one issue in one Protestant denomination, but we must bear in mind that this conflict occurred in the larger framework of other problems and developments. Not least among the important events of this early period was the opening up of the frontier and the vast expansion that was to affect both nation and Church. From a struggling sect of 15,000 members in 1784, the Methodist Episcopal Church grew to be the largest Protestant denomination in the United States at the time of separation in 1844. With this growth it had become a national body with great influence on the entire nation, it had fought through an internal structural conflict over its episcopal structure and suffered a major schism with the formation of the Methodist Protestant Church in 1828, and it was attempting to refine, expand, and develop its agencies and programs. A position taken in 1784 would have little effect on the rest of American society. The Church's action on the same issue in 1844 was of prime importance to the nation.

---

[13] Minutes of the Methodist Conferences, op. cit., p. 55. J. N. Norwood, in The Schism in The Methodist Episcopal Church, 1844: A Study of Slavery and Ecclesiastical Politics, (Alfred, N. Y.: Alfred University Press, 1923), pp. 14-15, graphically relates factors leading to suspension. "While preaching in a barn in Virginia in April, 1785, Dr. Coke made his audience so angry by his anti-slavery utterances that several individuals withdrew determined to do the preacher bodily harm. A fashionably dressed lady urged them on by offering a large reward if they would treat the offending minister to a hundred lashes. Bishop Asbury referring to the same incident remarked how agitated the people were over the new rules on slavery. Coke met with much persecution. Members withdrew from the church, houses where he had been wont to find a friendly entertainment were closed to him, the assassin's bullet was levelled at him, he was indicted by a grand jury and chased by a mob. This violence had the desired effect, for at a conference held early in June, 1785, less than six months after they were enacted, the objectionable rules were suspended. This proved to mean indefinite postponement."

The status of the slavery position at any time must be seen in the first thirty years of this crucial period in terms of a church struggling to attain a position, and in the last thirty years in terms of a church consolidating its position and adjusting itself to being the largest Protestant denomination. During this whole process, slavery confronted the church and the nation with a challenge to central principles. An early compromise between the northern and southern sections of the church resolved the problem for a time and contributed to the growth of the national denomination. The growing intensity of agitation over the problem of slavery in the nation paralleled the growth of the church, however, and the church was continually plagued by the introduction of the subject into its deliberations. Our analysis of the Church's position on slavery is undertaken with an awareness of the dynamic situation in which the position took shape and was remolded.

After the suspension of the rule on slavery in 1785, little is recorded on the official position on slavery until 1796. The regulation in 1796 reflects the problem that was to become increasingly central, that is, legislation in the various states which prevented emancipation. The regulation took cognizance of the laws by allowing exception where emancipation was prohibited. The Conference went further and allowed the yearly conferences to make regulations judged proper in their jurisdictions in terms of admission to official stations.[14]

Despite the qualifications, however, the position taken in 1796 indicates a strong aversion to slavery, and certain prohibitions and controls were put on slaveholders. Thus the question on slavery read, "What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of the crying evil of slavery?" In the answers given, the Conference declared that it was still more than ever convinced of the great evil of African slavery, required that slave-holders not be admitted until the preacher had spoken to him on slavery, declared that any member who sold a slave would be excluded from the society, established a procedure for the quarterly conferences to determine the number of years required to work out the price of purchase in the event that a slave was purchased, made provision for the freedom of children born into slavery, and requested members and preachers to take the subject of Negro slavery under consideration until the next General Conference in order that steps might be taken toward "eradicating this enormous evil from that part of the Church of God to which they are united."[15]

---

[14] Journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, I., (New York: Carlton and Phillips, 1855), pp. 22-23.

The position taken in 1796 was not as strong as the suspended rule of 1784, but it reflects some resolve to pursue the matter of slavery. The major shift is from a thorough antislavery position to a position that prescribes for emancipation where the laws permit, prohibition of selling (though not buying), and stipulations as to length of possession. The fact that the laws of the states would invalidate the rule as far as slaveholding was concerned certainly was a major delimitation on the proportion of members affected by the rule. On the one hand, the action of this Conference may be seen as acceptance of the legally protected institution in certain states. On the other hand, the resolve to work against slavery and the understanding of slavery as evil indicates that for the Church the matter was not yet settled. The indications of continued rejection of slavery loom even larger in retrospect when we consider the fortune of slavery in the Conference from 1800 on.

---

[15] Ibid, pp. 22-23.

Four factors combined in 1796 to encourage the Church to restate its opposition to slavery despite the disastrous effects of its all out effort in 1784. First, the frontier did not really open up until 1800, and thus the "new South" which came to demand so many slaves was only a future promise. Second, slaves were becoming an expensive burden in the "old South" and there was some anti-slavery sentiment developing there. Third, the first two factors were reflected in the fact that with the adoption of the Constitution in 1793, it was agreed that no new slaves would be brought into the country after 1807. Fourth, legislation prohibiting emancipation was not widespread, as yet. The situation was rapidly to change. Whitney's cotton gin was to make its impact, the frontier offered the necessary land and opportunity for expansion of the cotton crop, and the regulation against new imports of slaves was to cause the domestic market in slaves to expand and become extremely profitable. In 1796, however, the prevailing climate was one in which a strong, affirmative position was possible.

The rapid change in the socio-economic factors that caused a readjustment in the economic evaluation of slavery was to lead to a growing defense of the institution. The changes in the position of the Methodist Episcopal Church from 1800 on reflect what was occurring in society. In 1796 the Church recognized the barrier posed by state laws prohibiting emancipation, but resolved to work as best it could against the institution. From 1800 on, we see the move first to the resigned acceptance of slavery, and then to the protection of slavery against abolitionist attack within the Church. As we trace the changing position we begin to understand the growing conflict in the Church over slavery, and we establish a basis from which to assess the Separation.

In 1800, the action taken is ambiguous. That is, three motions demanding strong, affirmative action against slavery were rejected. At the same time, three other motions stipulating attempts to do away with or limit the institution were passed. The total result indicates the predicament in which the Church found itself as it tried to work out a viable position between the embryonic pro and anti-slavery forces. Thus it rejected attempts to bar future admission of slaveholders to the Church, to establish a stated date at which all Negro children born of members of the Methodist Society after July 4, 1800, would be emancipated, and the requirement that within one year every member holding slaves be required to give an instrument of emancipation for all his slaves, with the time to be served determined by the quarterly conference. At the same time, the Conference agreed to appoint a committee to prepare an address to the Methodist Societies stating the evils of the spirit and practice of slavery, and the necessity of doing away with it within the laws. It agreed, further, to direct the yearly conferences to draw up proper addresses to the states legislatures, from year to year, for a gradual abolition of slavery.[16] Finally, it required all travelling preachers to give up their slaves or forfeit their ministerial character in the Methodist Episcopal Church, within the laws.[17] In the motions accepted and rejected, we see the strange combination of a refusal to reject slaveholders as new members and refusal to require emancipation of slaves now held coupled with a statement of the evil of slavery and the attempt to do away with it within the laws while attempting to change the laws.[18] The law comes to play a more and more central role. At first, the law is a troublesome barrier which must be gradually changed through pressures exerted through the conferences. Later, however, the law becomes an absolute defense against the attacks on slavery as a moral evil or sin. Slavery is labelled a civil institution, and, as such, offers protection for Methodists of all rank who hold slaves against any claim that their action is morally evil.

In 1804, an attempt to place the matter of slavery into the hands of the bishops failed when Bishop Asbury refused to act on the matter after it was voted.[19] Since the bishops would not handle the matter, a committee on slavery was appointed. The committee report was adopted and the resolutions contained therein became Section IX of the Discipline, entitled, "Of Slavery." The Conference declared that "We are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery..."[20] It went on to set out recommendations and requirements concerning membership, travelling preachers, conditions of admittance of slaveholders, the exclusion of anyone who sold a slave, and the establishment of a procedure to ensure eventual emancipation of any slaves purchased. However, certain limitations were put on all of the stipulations allowing for exceptions where existing laws required.[21]

---

[16] Ibid, pp. 40-41. [17] Ibid, p. 44.

[18] In Slavery and Methodism, A Chapter In American Morality, 1780-1845, (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1965), Donald G. Mathews has presented the most thorough and penetrating analysis of this problem in the early period. He points out that the attempt to change the laws failed at the Annual Conference level. The Annual Conferences simply did not carry through with the necessary efforts. See pp. 20-21.

[19] Journals, I, op. cit., p. 60.

Two very interesting provisions indicate the limited effectiveness of the Church's position and the real shift in its thinking that was occurring in the face of a hardening stance on slavery in the South. The first of these provisions exempted members in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia from the operation of the rules applying to excluding of slave sellers and requiring stipulated dates of emancipation for slaves and progeny of slaves in the instance of slave buyers. The second provision of special interest to us was one which reflected a central problem in the South. The Church in the South felt a prime responsiblity to carry the Gospel to the slaves, and, in fact, there was a large Negro membership in the Church. The Church still maintained that slavery was an evil, however, and difficulties were encountered in gaining access to slaves out of fear of what might be taught. The final resolution of the report on slavery appears to be an attempt to reassure southerners that they need not fear the Methodist ministers. However, the Church took one more step towards its eventual defense of the civil institution of slavery against church intervention when it said,

---

[20] Ibid., p. 62.

[21] Ibid., p. 62-63.

> Let our preachers from time to time, as occasion serves, admonish and exhort all slaves to render due respect and obedience to the commands and interests of their respective masters.[22]

The southerners later claimed that the action taken in 1804 was part of the "compromise law" in the church on slavery, which gave recognition and validation to the institution in the South.[23] Their argument has considerable merit in the light of the two provisions just discussed and the stance taken at later General Conferences.

In 1808, the General Conference went even further to recognize the special problems of the Church in the South. In the action taken, we see how far the church had moved in a short period from its early position of strong condemnation. The Journal reads, "Moved from the chair, (apparently Bishop Asbury) that there be one thousand forms of Discipline prepared for the use of the South Carolina Conference, in which the section and rule on slavery be left out." The motion was carried, but then amended by a motion, "that the first two paragraphs of the section on slavery be retained in our Discipline; and that the General Conference authorize each annual conference to form their own regulations relative to buying and selling slaves."[24] This latter action meant in effect that the General Conference had given up in its attempt to require emancipation of slaves purchased and had even removed the regulation requiring exclusion of a slave seller. Undoubtedly the action represents the concern of the Church to expand in the South and its recognition that it could not do so if it attempted to regulate slavery.

---

[22] Ibid., 63.

[23] Journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, II, 1840, 1844, (N. Y.: Carlton and Phillips, 1855), Journal 1844, p. 187.

The action taken in 1812 revealed the virtual acceptance of slavery within the Church as well as within society. Slave buying and slave selling were no longer to be barriers to membership. The complete acceptance of the situation and the admission of futility in attempts to eradicate slavery were evidenced in the General Conferences of 1812 and 1816. In 1812, a motion to request the Conference "to inquire into the nature and moral tendency of slavery..." was introduced.[25] The Conference voted to have it lie on the table, and there it remained. Finally, in 1816, the General Conference admitted its virtual defeat in efforts to contain or abolish slavery when it adopted the report of the Committee on Slavery. The opening paragraph of that report well tells the story.

---

[24] Journal, I, p. 93.

[25] Ibid., p. 121.

> The committee to whom was referred the business of slavery beg leave to report, that they have taken the subject into serious consideration, and, after mature deliberation, they are of opinion that, under the present existing circumstances in relation to slavery, little can be done to abolish a practice so contrary to the principles of moral justice. They are sorry to say that the evil appears to be past remedy; and they are led to deplore the destructive consequences which have already accrued, and are yet likely to result therefrom.[26]

They went on to lament not only of the condition of laws, but of members "too easily contented with laws so unfriendly to freedom..."[27] and, in consequence, they were "constrained to admit that to bring about such a change in the civil code as would favour the cause of liberty is not in the power of the General Conference."[28] They noted the disparity of rules in the separate annual conferences and again changed the general rule on slavery in order to bring about uniformity and consistency. Thus they changed the part that still required officials to execute a document of emancipation, immediately or gradually, and substituted a passage that said, "Therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter where the laws of the state will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom."[29]

---

[26] Ibid., pp. 169-170.

[27] Ibid., p. 170.

[28] Ibid., p. 170.

[29] Ibid., P. 170. The previous statement had taken heed of the laws in the states, but had required security for emancipation. The Discipline, 1808, pp. 210-211 reads, "...and in the case of future admission to official stations, to require such security of those who hold slaves, for the emancipation of them, immediately or gradually, as the laws of the state respectively, and the circumstances of the case will admit."

As we have seen, the General Conference in 1816 admitted openly that it was beyond its powers, or that of the Church, to change the civil code. Accordingly it brought its regulation in line with the legal situation. Slaveholding was no longer a bar to membership or holding official station in the Church where laws prohibited emancipation. During the confrontation in 1844, when the southern delegates argued that a "compromise law" had been structured in the Church, they cited 1804 and 1816 as the Conferences which had constructed the compromise.[30] The action of the Conference of 1816 as reported in the Journal tends to support that argument.

The position taken in 1816 with its admission of futility marks the change from active opposition to reluctant acceptance of the existing situation. The time was fast approaching, however, when the abolition movement was to get underway. In response, we see an uneasiness exhibited in the Church as it tried to maintain unity between its northern and southern sections. At first the Church met the agitation by submerging discussion on the issue. Thus, in 1820, the report of the Committee on Slavery was debated extensively on two occasions, and it was finally voted to lay it on the table indefinitely.[31] Later, the Church was to move from suppression to attack in its treatment of internal abolitionism.

---

[30] Journal, II, p. 187.

[31] Journal, I, p. 232.

The action of the Conference in 1824 represented the response of the Church to some contending forces. The situation and the position of the Church is seen in the resolutions passed. The Conference first passed a resolution stipulating that whenever funds became available, the Missionary Society of the Church would send a missionary to the colony being established by the American Colonization Society in Africa.[32] The Committee on The Affairs of the People of Color proposed the following resolutions, which were passed.

> Resolved, etc. 1. That all our preachers ought prudently to enforce upon our members the necessity of teaching their slaves to read the word of God; and also that they give them time to hear the word of God preached on our regular days of divine service.
> Resolved, etc., 2. That our coloured preachers and official members have all the privileges in the district and quarterly meeting conferences which the usages of the country in different sections will justify: Provided also, that the presiding elder may, when there is a sufficient number, hold for them a separate district conference.
> Resolved, etc. 3. That any of the annual conferences may employ coloured preachers to travel where they judge their services necessary, provided they be recommended according to the form of Discipline.
> Resolved, etc. 4. That the above resolutions be made a part of the section in the Discipline on Slavery.[33]

In the action on the Colonization Society and the quoted resolutions, we see the response of the Church to pressures on it from three sides. The Church tried to balance the competing demands by responding favorably to all demands. Uneasiness about the institution of slavery was becoming widespread among northern Church leaders of all denominations. At the same time, southerners were defending slavery with more vigor because of the expanding cotton industry. The plan to send freedmen back to Africa had a number of advantages. The churchmen supported the plan because they saw a chance to send native missionaries to Africa coupled with the eventual end of slavery and removal of a problem in American society. The colonization plan, however, dealt only with freedmen, and the support of the plan by the Church brought it into conflict with two groups in the Church. The resolutions quoted above indicate the dilemma in which the Church found itself.

---

[32] Ibid., pp. 290-91.

[33] Ibid., p. 294.

Negro freedmen had become increasingly restive with the Church's position on slavery, and, even more, with what they saw as their second rate position in the Church. Negro congregations had been formed as early as 1796 independent of the Church. 1816 and 1820 saw the formation of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Two of the resolutions passed reflect the concern of the Church over the disenchantment of Negro members, and its efforts to assure colored members that they had full rights and privileges. Even while attempting to assuage the feelings of Negro members, however, the Church had to look South and put in qualifying phrases indicating that the assurances proferred were not intended to disturb customs in different parts of the country. Finally, the first resolution passed certifies the extent to which the Methodist Episcopal Church now accepted slavery as an institution with which a large number of its members were associated. Gone is all mention of buying and selling, of emancipation and exclusion from membership. What is demanded now is a "prudent" enforcing upon members of the necessity of teaching slaves to read the Word of God and hear the Word preached. The word "prudently" in that passage looms larger when we consider the General Conference of 1828.

By 1828, the anti-slavery movement was gaining momentum prior to its real flowering in the decade of the thirties. Garrisonian abolitionism had not yet taken hold, but tension over slavery was growing. The tension was reflected at the General Conference of 1828. A resolution dealing with the inhuman treatment of slaves was introduced, reading as follows,

> Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, That in all cases when there is creditable testimony against any members showing that they treat their slave or slaves with inhumanity, either in not supplying them with comfortable and sufficient food or raiment, or in separating husbands and wives or parents or children by buying or selling them in an inhuman traffic or our fellow-creatures, the person or persons so offending shall be dealt with in the same manner as in the cases of immorality; and that this regulation be inserted in our form of Discipline.[34]

The motion was laid on the table. A second time an effort was made to take up the resolution, but it was finally withdrawn. The Journal does not include any of the arguments on this resolution or give reasons as to why it failed to pass. In the absence of any discussion, the bare resolution and the action taken appears to be a further action on the

---

[34] Ibid., p. 337.

the part of the church to prove its acceptability to the South. The South was becoming more and more defensive about slavery and was beginning to respond to the northern agitation. Certainly the resolution raised a moral issue that did not fall under the protective umbrella of the civil institution. The action was, however, consistent with the position developed from 1800 on.

The discussion to this point has traced the movement away from the strong antislavery position near the turn of the century to a situation in which all action that might offend any party in the Church was avoided. Pressure was being applied from both sides of the controversy, and the Church was trying to steer a difficult course between the opposing forces. As pressure continued to mount, however, this neutrality through non-action was going to become impossible. Thus, as we move into the 'thirties, preservation of unity in the Church demanded that a position be taken on one side or other of the controversy. The position adopted was one of increasing opposition to abolitionism.

In 1832, a committee was appointed and directed to study the rights of colored people and the section on slavery in the Discipline. A report to the Conference was made by the committee, but withdrawn and laid on the table when the chairman stated that it was "inexpedient" to act upon it.[35] This was the last time that the Church could act through avoidance. In the four year gap between 1832 and 1836 abolitionism spread rapidly. Some New England Methodists were converted to a position akin to that of Garrison, and articles began to appear in church periodicals. Many Methodist clergy and laymen were to take up the cause, and they expressed themselves in memorials to the General Conference.

---

[35] Ibid., p. 415.

Three important actions on slavery were taken at the General Conference of 1836. The first was the adoption of the report of a select committee on slavery, the second was the passage of some resolutions on abolitionism, and the third was a decision concerning the appeal of some slaveholding candidates for the ministry from Virginia. The actions are quite significant individually, taken together they illustrate clearly the position of the Church just eight years prior to separation.

In response to numerous memorials, and following the reading of an address on the subject of slavery from a number of members in the New England and New Hampshire Conferences, a select committee was appointed to handle all communications on the subject.[36] Late in the Conference, the committee reported that it had considered the memorials, many of which called for restoration of the rules on slavery formerly in the *Discipline* and passage of new measures by the

---

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 440-442.

General Conference to free the Church from slavery. The committee took the position that it would be "highly improper for the General Conference to take any action that would alter or change the rules on the subject of slavery," and concluded the report with a resolution saying, "That it was inexpedient to make any change in our book of Discipline respecting slavery, and we deem it improper further to agitate the subject in the General Conference."[37] Here we have the first clear statement of opposition to abolitionist agitation.

The General Conference of 1836 met in Cincinnati. While it was in session, two members of the Conference from New England lectured in the city on abolitionism.[38] The Conference reacted strongly to this threat to its consistent attempt to deal with the matter in committee behind closed doors. Over a full day was devoted to debate on resolutions censuring the two members who lectured on "the agitating topic of modern abolitionism." The preamble and resolutions state clearly the position of the highest official Church body in 1836. The first resolution passed one hundred twenty to fourteen. The second passed one hundred thirty-seven to zero. The text of the position adopted read as follows,

---

[37] Ibid., p. 475.

[38] Mathews, op. cit., identifies the two who lectured as Samuel Norris and George Storrs, see p. 141.

> Whereas great excitement has prevailed in this country on the subject of modern abolitionism, which is reported to have been increased in this city recently by the unjustifiable conduct of two members of the General Conference, in lecturing upon and in favour of that agitating topic; and whereas such a course on the part of any of its members is calculated to bring upon this body the suspicions and distrust of the community, and misrepresent its sentiments in regard to the point at issue; and whereas in this aspect of the case, a due regard for its own character, as well as a just concern for the interests of the Church confided to its care, demand a full, decided, and unequivocal expression of the views of the General Conference in the premises, therefore:--
>
> Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, 1. That they disapprove in the most unqualified sense the conduct of two members of the General Conference, who are reported to have lectured in this city recently upon and in favour of modern abolitionism.
>
> Resolved, 2. that they are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave as it exists in the slave-holding states of this Union.
>
> Resolved, 3. That the foregoing preamble and resolutions be published in our periodicals.[39]

The language of the text and the vote recorded on the resolutions indicates the overwhelming rejection of the abolitionist position on the part of the Church. The censure of the members, opposing their right to speak on the subject is clear evidence of the attitude of official Methodism. Perhaps of equal interest to us, however, is the position taken in the second resolution, in which slavery is labeled a civil and political relation. The Church's disclaimer of any "right, wish, or intention" to interfere with the institution indicates the total acceptance of slavery by the Methodist Episcopal Church and goes far beyond the earlier admission of inability to change the existing pattern. The Discipline continued to carry the question in the section on slavery on what should be done to extirpate the evil from the Church. The position taken in response to the abolitionist spokesmen makes it quite clear that the answer to that question in 1836 was "Nothing."

---

[39] Journal, I. p. 447.

In a related action near the end of the Conference, the following resolution was introduced by William Winans of Mississippi pertaining to an anonymous pamphlet distributed to members of the Conference,

> On motion resolved that a pamphlet, circulated among the members of this conference, purporting to be an 'Address to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by a member of that body,' containing reports of the discussion on modern abolitionism, palpably false, and calculated to make an impression to the injury of the character of some of the members engaged in the aforesaid discussion, is an outrage on the dignity of this body and meriting unqualified reprehension.[40]

Orange Scott, a New England abolitionist, then avowed that he was the author and requested time to defend himself. The following day, he addressed the Conference at length. A motion was made to refer the matter to a select committee, but after considerable debate this motion failed, and the vote was called on the resolution. In another display of its strongly anti-abolitionist stance, the Conference adopted the resolution proclaiming the pamphlet an outrage on the dignity of the body by a vote of ninety-seven to nineteen.[41] Previously, the Conference had been able to handle the issue quietly by affirming its Committee recomendation that it was inexpedient to take any action. In 1836, the abolitionists forced the Conference to take a strongly coercive action after prolonged floor debate. The Church had succeeded in officially putting the issue aside, but it was now out in the open. The abolitionists were censured, but not silenced.

---

[40] Ibid., p. 479.

[41] Ibid., p. 486.

A third action concerned with slavery indicates how far the Church had come in its transition from the early antislavery position to its acceptance of slavery as a fact of life not to be opposed by the Church. The action is of particular interest because it involves a decision of the Conference in a case identical to one which was to arise in 1844, at which time the Church was to reverse itself completely on its stand. Two pages in the Journal of 1836 are devoted to a report from the Committee on the Judiciary on their recommendations in a case arising out of a petition to the General Conference from twenty-nine members of the Baltimore Conference residing in Virginia. The petitioners claimed that the Baltimore Conference refused to receive a young man into the itinerancy because he held slaves, and, further, that districts in Virginia were so located that the exception to the General Rule on slavery ought to maintain. They argued that their official positions were in jeopardy, and that consistent action by the Baltimore Conference would include removing them from official positions. The Committee denied the contention that the Baltimore Conference had rejected the candidate on the specific grounds charged, and supported the annual conference right to decide in such cases. However, it went further and agreed with the petitioners that they indeed were protected under the exception to the General Rule on slavery because of the difficulty of emancipation under the laws of Virginia.[42]

This decision tended to hedge on the issue of whether a slaveholding candidate could be admitted to the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church by sustaining the general argument of the petitioners, yet refusing to rule on the specific grounds of rejection employed by the Baltimore Conference. The case is important because it stated in principle that the exception to the General Rule on slavery obtains in the case of Virginians. The principle established was to be tested in 1840 when the members of the Westmoreland, Virginia, circuit were again to petition the General Conference on the subject of the Baltimore Conference withholding rights from a portion of the ministry.

The mood of the General Conference of 1836 evidenced in these three actions was clearly one of conciliation to southern churchmen and opposition to abolitionists. The opposition to abolitionism was clearly stated. The support for those in the slaveholding states, however, was thus far expressed in muted form in such terms as "inexpedient to act" and general support of the legal exception to the general rule. However, in 1840, four years prior to separation, the southerners were to demand and get a clear expression of support for their position of absolute non-interference in the institution of slavery.

---

[42] Ibid., pp. 466-67.

The Conference of 1840 is exceedingly important to us in that it represents the culmination of the continuing move of the church away from its initial strong antislavery position. Abolitionism had grown in the Church in the four years since 1836. Numerous petitions, memorials and addresses on the issue were presented to the Conference. Yet, the Conference maintained consistency in the compromise position that had developed since the beginning of the century. Understanding of the action taken in 1840 contributes much to our interpretation of the Separation in 1844.

The mood of the Conference was set by the Bishops' Address, delivered early in the Conference. The Address demonstrates clearly the extent to which the position of the Church represented an accommodation to the cultural situation and the emphasis that was put on preservation of the unity of the Church. That the accommodation was necessary for the growth of the institution, and that the preservation was highly important for the nation as a whole cannot be disputed. However, the rejection of both accommodation and preservation in 1844 is difficult to defend in the light of the position taken in 1840. The moral interpretation of the issue is stated explicitly in the Bishops' Address.

In the opening passages, the bishops note the expected disparity of views in a Church covering a wide area with differing domestic and civil institutions. Then, in regard to the role the bishops have played, they go on to say, "It has been the constant and united endeavour of your General Superintendents to preserve uniformity and harmony in these respects; and, as far as practicable, prevent conflicting action in all the official bodies in the Church. . . ."[43] They go on to recall that in 1836 the Conference had advised the Church in the Pastoral Address "in the true spirit of the ministers of the peaceful Gospel of Christ" to abstain from agitation of the exciting subject of abolitionism in the Church. Unfortunately, in contravention of that counsel, the subject had been agitated, "and in such a spirit, as to disturb the peace of the Church. . . ." They lament the fact that resolutions of censure and condemnation have been passed in relation to those over whom there exists no legitimate jurisdiction, and then suggest that the proper approach is through the language of respect, persuasion, and kindness.[44] The bishops do take note of the few instances of secession that have occurred, but prophecy that the incidence of secession will be slight. Their prophecy proves accurate in terms of the number of seceders, but fails to comprehend the significance that the secessions will have.

In a clear indication of their underlying hope to hold things together, the bishops then embark on a rehearsal of the experience of the Church with slavery since its organization in this country. The interesting thing to us is that they introduce this particular discussion with the statement that the past experience will point the way to the

---

[43] Journal, II, p. 134.

[44] Ibid., p. 135.

"safest" and "most prudent" policy to be pursued. Safety and prudence are legitimate and are an apt description of the course the Church had pursued. This avowal of the position of the Church, however, only makes more striking the contrast to the action taken just four years later.

The bishops choose four characteristic features of the position of the Church on slavery that they feel should be kept in view in light of the agitation. They cite, first, the fact that the general rule on slavery has remained unchanged as a testamentary of the Church's sentiments. They follow this up, however, by indicating that in all other enactments on slavery the Church has paid due regard to the laws of the states and the primacy of the civil authority in this matter, that simple holding of slaves has never been a cause of excommunication, and rules passed to control buying, selling, and holding of slaves have always had to be changed or repealed. These three characteristics recall the lament of the Conference of 1816, at which time it was recognized that the Church could do nothing to change the existing situation. The bishops cite these factors as a basis of guidance of any future action, and say,

> These important facts, which form prominent features of our past history as a Church, may very properly lead us to inquire for that course of action in future, which may be best calculated to preserve the peace and unity of the whole body, promote the greatest happiness of the slave population, and advance generally, in the slaveholding community of our country, the humane and hallowing influence of our holy religion.[45]

---

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 136.

In that passage, the goals of peace and unity, and the acceptance of slavery along with the limited responsibility of the Church toward slaves and slaveholders are clearly stated.

The bishops leave no doubt that slavery is now understood to be a civil matter and not a moral issue when they say, near the end of the portion of the address dealing with slavery,

> Can we, at this eventful crisis, render a better service to our country, than by laying aside all interference with relations authorized and established by the civil laws, and applying ourselves wholly and faithfully to what specially appertains to our 'high and holy calling;' to teach and enforce the moral obligations of the gospel, in application to all the duties growing out of the different relations in society?[46]

The Church's task is to enforce the moral obligations of the gospel, but those obligations are understood in terms of support of civil and social institutions.

The bishops concluded their comments on slavery by noting that the conflicting constructions and actions of some of the annual conferences of the North and the South in regard to the general rule on slavery indicates a need for a body having jurisdiction to express a clear opinion on the matter to serve as a guide for the Church. The bishops were only empowered to speak to the Church and not for the Church. The Conference proceeded to take two actions, however, which certified the position incorporated in the Bishops' Address as the position of the Church.

---

[46] Ibid., p. 137.

The first action of the General Conference on slavery resulted from an appeal to the Conference by a minister named Silas Comfort from the Missouri Conference. General Conference _Journals_ carry many cases in which ministers who have been censured or even suspended by the action of an annual conference appeal to the General Conference for a final ruling. The Missouri Conference had tried Comfort for mal-administration and had found him guilty. Only the barest outline is presented in the Journal, but it is apparent from what transpired that one of the central grounds of appeal was the fact that a coloured person had testified against Comfort. The appeal was debated at some length, after which a motion to sustain the Missouri Conference was rejected by vote of the General Conference. On the next meeting day, a motion to reconsider the vote was made, and, after discussion, withdrawn. At this juncture, the following resolution was proposed by I. A. Few, a delegate from Georgia,

> Resolved, That is is inexpedient and unjustifiable for any preacher among us to permit coloured persons to give testimony against white persons, in any state where they are denied that privilege in trials at law.[47]

The Few resolution was passed seventy-four to forty-six. There was considerable effort to revise or rescind the motion later, but it remained as passed. In apparent response to the continued discussion on the resolution and the turmoil it was causing, Bishop Soule introduced three resolutions intended to clarify and explain the position of the Church on the issue.[48] The resolutions, which passed by a vote of ninety-seven to twenty-seven, were stated in such a way as to assure southerners that their social and civil relations were to be respected and to assure northerners that the rights of coloured persons were to be respected where the situation permitted. The test was to be "safety to the peace of society, and the best interests of all concerned."

---

[47] _Ibid._, 60.

The most important thing for our consideration is that the Few resolution breaks new ground as far as the church position is concerned. It carries the position of the Church beyond that of non-interference in civil affairs to the point where the civil law now determines Church practice. The standards of the community are now to be the standards of the Church. This is indeed a position far removed from the earlier insistence that the Church would do everything in its power to oppose the evil of slavery and, especially, would attempt to bring about a change in the laws where they prohibited the emancipation demanded by the Church. The Few resolution extended the position of the Church, but was not inconsistent with developments since the early part of the century. It created a stir in the Conference and was to come before the Conference again four years later. Another action of the General Conference of 1840 may be of even more importance to our effort to assess the Separation of 1844.

---

[48] Ibid., 109.

We noted that in 1836 the General Conference had responded to a petition from some members of the Westmoreland, Virginia, Circuit of the Balitmore Conference by stating in principle that the exception to the general rule on slavery applied in case of the petitioners. In 1840, a petition was again presented from the Westmoreland circuit, claiming this time that the Baltimore Annual Conference had refused to elect to ordination local preachers on the single ground of their being slaveholders.[49] A select committee of nine was appointed to consider the petition. The committee presented a report to the Conference, which was adopted in full, which made explicit the position of the Church on the question of the effect of slaveholding on the qualifications of a candidate for the ministry.

In concluding that the conditions in Virginia were such as to support the claim of the petitioners that their situation fell under the exception to the General Rule, the committee made several important points. They maintained, first, that the policy and practice of the Church for fifty years showed that despite convictions about the great evil of slavery, the Church had never insisted on emancipation in contravention of civil authority. The effect of this tradition of non-interference on the ministry is made very clear in the following statement,

---

[49] Ibid., pp. 34-35.

> . . . it therefore appears to be a well-settled and long-established principle in the polity of the church that no ecclesiastical disabilities are intended to ensue either to the ministers or members of the church in those states where the civil authority forbids emancipation.[50]

The committee's rendering of history supported a concluding resolution which made it exceedingly clear that slaveholding did not constitute a barrier to any grade of the ministry in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Thus in 1840, just four years prior to separation, the officially adopted position of the church stated,

> Resolved, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, That, under the provisional exception of the general rule of the church on the subject of slavery, the simple holding of slaves, or mere ownership of slave property, in states or territories where the laws do not admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and cannot, therefore, be considered as operating any forfeiture of right in view of such election and ordination.[51]

The committee report included one further clarification of the Church's position on slavery. Despite the decay of the strong anti-slavery position taken in the eighteenth century, the Church had continued to maintain the disciplinary question on slavery which labeled the institution a great evil. Although not stated, the imputation was that association with evil reflected on the moral stature of individuals. The uneasiness of the effects of this continued relation with evil contributed to continual attempts to demand strong action by the Church by northerners and to defensive responses by southerners. The Conference of 1840 freed Church members from any feelings of guilt or evil by association by affirming the committee report, which established a clear line of separation between evil institutions and any moral responsibility of those associated with the institutions. In a series of questions, the committee set forth a doctrine which removed the imputation of evil or moral responsibility from those persons associated with an evil institution.

---

[50] _Ibid._, p. 168.

[51] _Ibid._, p. 171.

> May not the principles and causes giving birth and perpetuity to great moral and political systems or institutions be regarded as evil, even essentially evil, in every primary aspect of the subject, without the implication of moral obliquity on the part of those involuntarily connected with such systems and institutions, and providentially involved in their operation and consequences? May not a system of this kind be jealously regarded as in itself more or less inconsistent with natural right and moral rectitude, without the imputation of guilt and derelict motive, in the instance of those who, without any choice or purpose of their own, are necessarily subjected to this influence and sway?
>
> Can it be considered as just or reasonable to hold individuals responsible for the destiny of circumstances over which they have no control? Thus conditioned in the organic arrangements and distributions of society, is there any necessary connection between the moral character of the individual and that of the system? In this way the modifying influence of unavoidable agencies or circumstances in the formation of character is a well-known principle, and one of universal recognition in law, morals, and religion, and upon which all administration of law, not unjust and opressive, must proceed. . . .[52]

It seems necessarily to follow from this that southern Church members were absolved of any responsibility for ridding the nation of the institution because circumstances were beyond their control. Here, perhaps, was the final step in the movement from an antislavery position to acceptance of slavery by the Church.

---

[52] Ibid., pp. 170-171.

When the General Conference adjourned in 1840, it had, in effect, completely rescinded any formal objection to slavery in the Church. Slaveholding was not to be a bar to any grade of the ministry and no moral taint was to fall on those associated with slavery by force of circumstance. The bishops had asked for preservation and unity of the whole body, and the Conference had done its best to maintain that peace. As we have seen, 1840 was just a culmination of the actions of the General Conference over the preceding forty years. The Church had recognized early that it could not change the pattern in society. In part, its decision to cease its opposition was based on the recognition that opposition would damage future growth. However, the decision was also based on awareness that it is necessary to work within structures, and, realistically, the Church refocused its efforts towards evangelization of the slaves and betterment of their conditions. In order to protect access to the slaves, the Church avoided all actions which might offend southerners. Thus, we saw that in 1828, the attempt to take a stand on inhuman treatment of slaves failed. As the pressure for abolition grew, the Methodist Episcopal Church recognized that it had a responsibility as a national body to do what it could to hold the nation together.

The position that was established through successive Conferences from 1800 on was consistent, it was pragmatic, and it may be argued that it was morally defensible in terms of the attempt to hold the nation together and bring about change from within. Certainly the history of the place of Negroes in American history since the Civil War up to our own day does not sustain the argument that abolition at any price was the only alternative. Their may have been other legitimate opitons, and the course that the Church was following, if pursued to its conclusion, might have been one of them.

The Methodist Episcopal Church had been under growing pressure since 1828, at least, to move toward an abolitionist stance. The Church had resisted that pressure and had countered with ever more explicit reassurance to the southern portion of the Church that its position was secure in the Church. Between 1840 and 1844, the pressures on the Church became intense. Abolitionism had finally become a popular, even dominant, movement in the North, winning converts among former neutralist conservatives and even among former attackers. The fight moved from the hands of the revivalists directly onto the floor of the Congress and the national political battle was on. Hard-core Methodist abolitionists, frustrated by the rejection of their position by the Church, and convinced that theirs was a lost cause in the Church, seceded. Visions of fragmentation of the Church in the North began to haunt Methodist conservatives who had fought to hold the Church together against possible southern secession. In the midst of all this, it was discovered that a Methodist bishop, Bishop James O. Andrew of Georgia, had, since his ordination in 1832, become a slaveholder by inheritance and re-marriage. Floods of petitions and memorials demanding action against the entry of the abomination, slavery, into the episcopacy were prepared for the Conference of 1844. Northerners and southerners waged a verbal battle in regional Church periodicals with increasing intensity.

Slavery was the overriding issue at the Conference of 1844. Yet, the Conference appeared to run on two tracks. The Bishops' Address, assaying the state of the Church, presenting a picture that could be described as pastoral serenity. The business of the Conference went on, committees met and worked on plans for missions, education, and publication. Against this passive background, fierce debates took place on two major cases brought before the Conference. Threats of division were made, first in speeches, finally in a formal protest. Briefs for the positions of the contending sides were drawn up and presented to the Conference. Finally, twelve resolutions were passed, available if the southerners subsequently felt they must withdraw. The resolutions constituted what was later called the Plan of Separation. The Conference ended inconclusively, with the date and place of the next meeting established. It hadn't been declared, but the Church had in fact separated.

A listing of some of the events entered in the Journal will give some indication of the mood of the Conference as it progressed, as well as provide an outline for our consideration of the Conference. The General Conference of 1844 met in New York City from May 1st until June 10th.

May 3 -- The appointment of a Committee on Slavery ordered.[53]

May 7 -- The appeal of Francis A. Harding from a decision of the Baltimore Conference entered. Harding, a minister, had been suspended for refusing to manumit slaves that came into his possession by marriage.[54]

May 11 -- Decision of the Baltimore Conference in the Harding case sustained by a vote of one hundred seventeen to fifty-six.[55]

May 14 -- The Harding case and a continued flow of petitions and memorials on slavery prompted the appointment of a committee of three from the North and three from the South to come up with some plan for the possible permanent pacification of the Church.[56]

May 17 -- Bishop Soule requested separate meetings of northern and southern delegates for that afternoon.[57]

May 20 -- On resolution, the case of Bishop Andrew, a slaveholding bishop, was referred to the Committee on the Episcopacy.[58]

May 22 -- A letter from Bishop Andrew explaining his situation was read to the Conference. A resolution requesting Bishop Andrew's resignation was introduced, amended, and discussed over a period of two days.[59]

May 31 -- A communication from the bishops on the case of Bishop Andrew, calling for a postponement of a vote on the case until the Conference of 1848, was read. The bishops hoped that the "embarassment" might have ceased or time might have allowed for wisdom and discreet adjudication.[60]

---

[53] Journal, II, 1844, p. 13.

[54] Ibid., p. 29.

[55] Ibid., pp. 33-34.

[56] Ibid., pp. 42-43.

[57] Ibid., pp. 49-50.

[58] Ibid., p. 58.

[59] Ibid., pp. 63-66.

[60] Ibid., pp. 75-76.

June 1 -- Bishop Hedding withdrew his name from the Bishop's Address on Bishop Andrew. The other bishops supported the address. By a vote of ninety-five to eighty-four, the Address was laid on the table.
A resolution calling for Bishop Andrew to desist from the exercise of his office so long as the impediment remained was passed by a vote of one hundred and ten to sixty-eight.[61]

June 5 -- The delegates from the slaveholding states submitted a declaration that the continued agitation and action of the Conference on slavery rendered the continued jurisdiction of the General Conference over southern Conferences "inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states."[62]

June 6 -- The report of the Committee on Slavery was read and adopted. It called for rescinding of the Few resolution on coloured testimony passed in 1840, requested that a slaveholding bishop not be elected, and asked the Conference to take measures to separate the Church entirely from slavery.
A protest of the minority against the action in Bishop Andrew's case was presented.
A resolution was adopted calling for a committee to prepare a statement of the facts of the proceedings in the case of Bishop Andrew. The bishops entered a request for Conference direction on Bishop Andrew's standing, support, and work. Despite earlier resolution that he desist, his name was to remain in official publications, his support was affirmed, and he was given leave to decide what work to do, all by votes of heavy margins.[63]

June 7 -- The Few resolution on coloured testimony was rescinded.[64]

June 8 -- A Committee of Nine, appointed to consider the declaration from the southern delegates, made their report, including twelve resolutions which outlined, in fact, a plan of separation. The resolutions were adopted.[65]

We will need to examine the Harding and Andrew cases and the content of some of the addresses and statements. It may be in order, however, to make some general comment on what we observed from the above calendar of events. Bishop Andrew's association with slavery had received a great deal of attention in Church publications prior to the Conference, and it was to be expected that conflict would arise over the issue. Yet, the Conference had been in session for nearly a month before the resolution calling on him to desist from his office was passed. Prior to that, two competing movements were evident. The introduction of numerous petitions on slavery calling for antislavery action indicated the widespread feeling now existing in the North, and the call for action was strong. The decision to support the Baltimore Conference on the appeal of Francis Harding appeared to signal the ascendancy of the abolitionist view, since Harding's case appeared to fit precisely into the exemption for Virginia members of the Baltimore Conference certified in 1840. The Harding decision, decided by a two to one margin, heralded the growing strength of the abolitionist position.

---

[61] Ibid., pp. 81-84.

[62] Ibid., p. 109.

[63] Ibid., pp. 112-121.

[64] Ibid., pp. 123-124.

[65] Ibid., pp. 130-137.

Shortly after the Harding decision, however, the Conference stepped back from the abolitionist view, and made two attempts to pacify the growing acrimony. The first of these attempts was the appointment of the committee to devise a plan for the permanent pacification of the Church. This effort failed when the committee was forced to report that they were unable to work out such a plan. The second attempt to suppress the mounting pressures that signaled a breach in the Church was contained in the Address of the Bishops, in which a plea was made for postponing action on the case of Bishop Andrew for four years. This plea followed two days of heated discussion. It is difficult to conjecture about what might have been. We can note, however, that if just six of those voting to lay the Address on the table had been persuaded to vote otherwise, the disposition of that case, which became the center of the southern protest, might have been delayed and later resolved. It is fruitless to argue that the Church would have remained together. It is legitimate to point out, however, that there was still at that time some disposition to try to avoid the breach. It can be said with some certainty that the attempt by the bishops to hold the Church together was the last such effort. The very next action of the Conference was to vote on the resolution calling on Bishop Andrew to desist from the exercise of his office. The margin on the vote on the bishops call for postponement was eleven. The margin on the vote adopting the resolution on Bishop Andrew was forty-two.

The Conference had been in session for an entire month prior to the vote on the resolution concerning Bishop Andrew on Saturday, June 1st. From that time on it was clear that the lines had formed, and the march to separation was rapid. On the 5th of June, the southerners entered their declaration, which was an open threat that separation was imminent if the Conference pursued its present course. The following day the Conference adopted the report of the Committee on Slavery. The repeal of the resolution on testimony of coloured persons, the stand against the election of a slaveholding bishop, and the call for measures to separate the Church from slavery were all provisions favorable to the abolitionist forces. What was left for the few remaining days was the presentation of the formal arguments of the opposing forces, now clearly divided into geographical sections, and the adoption of the Plan of Separation.

We have seen in outline form what happened at the General Conference of 1844. We may conclude our discussion of the Conference by looking briefly at the Bishops' Address, the Harding and Andrew cases which were the basis for the confrontation, if not the cause of separation, and the arguments used by the opposing sides once the issue was joined.

The Bishops' Address was delivered on the second day in which the Conference was in session. It is a remarkable statement of the state of the Church in the light of the growing agitation in the society and the ferment and secessions in the Church. No mention was made of the secession that led to the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The bishops did speak of the need for calm reflection by men of good will, but the reference was not specific. They anticipated the pending dispute over Bishop Andrew and accordingly made lengthy comment on the nature and limitation of the work of bishops. In part, they said that the plan of operation of the general superintendency is, "...general, embracing the whole work in the connectional order, and not dioscesan, or sectional." They reiterated this point by saying, "...our superintendency is itinerant, and not local."[66] These passages are notable because they are used later in support of the argument that a bishop does not serve the South alone and that a slaveholding bishop would have problems serving in the North.

---

[66] Journal, Vol. II, 1844, p. 156.

The only direct mention of Negroes in the address concerns a discussion of the problem of extending the missions among the people of color. In fact, the whole discussion seems to indicate a relief that southerners now trusted Methodists and relief that agitation had not upset that trust. In the only comment that relates to the tension that existed in the Church over the slavery controversy, the bishops displayed a lack of awareness that can only be feigned when they say,

> . . It is a matter of gratulation to the friends of humanity and religion, and of devout thanksgiving to God, that the unhappy excitement which, for several years, spread a dark cloud over our prospects, and weakened our hands, and filled our hearts with grief, has died away, and almost ceased to blast our labours. Confidence in the integrity of our principles, and the purity of our motives, which for a time was shaken, is restored. (emphasis added) New and extensive fields are opening before us, and inviting us to the harvest. The conviction of the duty and benefit of giving religious instruction to servants is constantly increasing. The self-sacrificing zeal of the missionaries is worthy of the cause in which they are engaged, -- the cause of humanity; the cause of the salvation of souls; the cause of God. . . [67]

The cloud that had died away was the uneasiness with which southern slaveholders viewed Methodist preachers because of the avowed opposition to the institution on the part of the Church. The successive movement of the Church from an antislavery position to that of complete acceptance of slavery as a civil and social arrangement that we have traced had apparently assured southerners that Methodists were safe. This was the cause for "gratulation."

---

[67] Ibid., p. 164.

In the 1950's and 1960's, southern churchmen have often inquired of northern accusers, in rather pointed fashion, why the concern about segregation in the South was accompanied by the appalling lack of integration in the churches in the North. This thrust has been well aimed. It is interesting to note that the Bishops' Address of 1844 reveals that a similar charge could have been levelled at the abolitionist section of the Church in that day. The bishops cited figures to show that the colored membership in the North was meagre, while in the South it was substantial. They asked a rather penetrating question of those who attacked the institution of slavery.

> It is presumed that the freedom of the people of colour, within the bounds of these Conferences, will not be urged as the cause of their not being brought under religious influence, and gathered into the fold of Christ. We are certainly not prepared to admit that a state of servitude is more favourable to the success of the Gospel, in its experimental and practical effects, than a state of freedom. . . .[68]

As we have previously noted, the Conference was prepared for a confrontation on the question of Bishop Andrew holding slaves. Certainly this was the issue on which the opposing sides grounded their positions. In a sense, however, the case of Francis Harding, of the Baltimore Conference, was a tip-off of the division that was to come. It revealed the extent to which the Conference had changed in its attitude toward slavery since 1840. In brief, Methodism had come to, or been driven to, the conclusion that compromise with slavery was too high a price to pay for institutional unity. The Wesleyan Methodist secession demonstrated just how costly that compromise might be.

---

[68] Ibid., p. 165.

The importance of secession and the threat of secession to the reversal of position in the four years between 1840 and 1844 cannot be underestimated. In 1842, Orange Scott, one of the Methodist abolitionists who had been censured by the Church for his efforts, left the Church. Six months later there were 6,000 who had joined him, and a year after that, the Wesleyan Methodists numbered 15,000. The first General Conference was held in 1844. Although the number was never large, the threat of a flood of seceders and the rapidity of the growth of the Wesleyans played a large role in the change of position of northern delegates to the 1844 General Conference of the Church. Heretofore, all efforts had been directed toward protecting the southern flank. Now attack came from another direction and forced the northern moderates into a choice which almost inevitably meant the loss of one or another large group within the Church. It is notable that after the Separation, many of the seceders returned to the Church[69]

The Harding case came up early in the Conference. Harding appealed from a decision of the Baltimore Conference, which suspended him from the travelling ministry because he had come into the possession of slaves through marriage and refused to emancipate them. The case was debated at some length, and with some heat. In the appeal, reference was made to the action of the General Conference of 1840 declaring that members of the Baltimore Conference residing in Virginia were exempt from the application of the restriction on slavery. In ruling against Harding and in favour of the Baltimore Conference, the General Conference of 1844 reversed the position taken four years earlier. In the Harding case the battle lines were drawn, and unity may have been lost when the decision was rendered. The fact that the decision was followed almost immediately by the appointment of a committee to formulate a plan of pacification of the Church, which failed, and separate meetings of northern and southern delegates indicates that the Conference recognized the impact of what it had done.

---

[69] See The History of Methodism, op. cit., II, pp. 39-47 for discussion of the Wesleyan secession.

If the Harding case signaled the breach, the case of Bishop Andrew was the issue over which the breach occurred. The case was quite similar to that of Harding. Bishop Andrew had come into possession of slaves through inheritance and remarriage some time after becoming a bishop. The laws of his state prevented emancipation. The only difference in the two cases before the Conference was that Andrew was a bishop. During the time that the Church had opposed abolitionism and had moved to the complete acceptance of slavery for members and ministers in slaveholding states, it had balked at electing a slaveholder to the episcopacy. This resistance, despite the massive capitulation of the North to the southern position in successive Conferences, had rankled some southerners. Other southerners accepted the stand on the episcopacy as part of the compromise and consistent with the continued claim of the Church that slavery was evil. Bishop Andrew had been elected to the episcopacy in 1832, and there is some indication that he was chosen in place of other, favored, southern candidates because he did not hold slaves.[70] The resolutions continuing Andrew's financial support and allowing him to decide what work he would do support the position of the "Reply to the Protest" of the minority that the action of the Conference was merely advisory. Advisory it may have been, but southerners interpreted it as a clear challenge by the Conference to the integrity of Methodists in the slaveholding states. The decision in the Harding case and the action rescinding the resolution on coloured testimony gave them support for their interpretation. The "Protest of the Minority" and the "Reply to the Protest" center their arguments around the Andrew case.

When the Conference passed the resolution calling upon Bishop Andrew to desist from his office, a southern spokesman informed the Conference that a formal protest would be entered. On June 6th, the "Protest of the Minority of the General Conference Against the Action of that Body in the Case of Bishop Andrew" was read.[71]
The protest was made, it was claimed, in behalf of 5,000 ministers and nearly 500,000 members in thirteen annual conferences plus parts of others. The protest was levied against

---

[70] Mathews, op. cit., pp. 116-117.

[71] Journal, II, 1944, p. 113, printed in full in appendix, pp. 186-198.

> the recent act of a majority of this General Conference, in an attempt, as understood by the minority, to degrade and punish the Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by declaring it to be the sense or judgment of the General Conference that he desist from the exercise of his episcopal functions, without the exhibition of any alledged offence against the laws or discipline of the Church, without form of trial, or legal conviction of any kind, and in the absence of any charge of want of qualification or faithfulness in the performance of the duties pertaining to his office.[72]

The Protest developed the argument seen in the quoted passage by leaning heavily on the southerners' interpretation of Church law. The action of the Conference was seen as a violation of what the southerners called as the "compromise law of the Church" on the subject of slavery, which the protesters claimed was the only law bearing on the case of Bishop Andrew.[73] There was no such law in fact, which southerners recognized, but they interpreted the actions of earlier General Conferences, with some justification, as a compromise agreement having the force of law in the Church. The understanding of the southern delegates of the history of the compromise and their interpretation of what the compromise entailed is embodied in the following two passages,

> The law of the church on slavery has always existed since 1785, but especially since 1804, and in view of the adjustment of the whole subject, in 1816, as a virtual, though informal, contract of mutual concession and forbearance between the north and the south, then, as now, known and existing as distinct parties, in relation to the vexed problems of slavery and abolition. . . .[74]

> . . . The southern Conferences, in agreeing to the main principles of the compromise law in 1804 and 1816, conceded, by express stipulation, their right to resist northern interference in any form,

---

[72] Ibid., p. 186.

[73] Ibid., 1. 187.

[74] Ibid., pp. 187-188.

> upon the condition, pledged by the north, that while the whole church, by common consent, united in proper effort for the mitigation and final removal of the evil of slavery, the north was not to interfere, by excluding from membership or ministerial office in the church persons owning and holding slaves in states where emancipation is not practicable, and where the liberated slave is not permitted to enjoy freedom.[75]

The main thrust of the Protest is leveled at the law of the Church. In addition, the southerners introduce the argument of church and state, claiming the Church has no right to interfere with civil regulation or the social order;[76] they reject the idea that the Conference resolution on Bishop Andrew was advisory only;[77] they complain that the North looks to conscience and principle rather than law,[78] and they maintain that due to the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, all in it are connected with slavery. They suggest that if some Methodists find themselves no longer able to live with slavery they ought to leave the Church to purify themselves.[79] Finally, the Protest raises the question of the relation of the General Conference and bishops and claims that the Conference does not have authority over bishops.[80]

In their rendering of the history of the Church and slavery, in their understanding of the position the Church has taken on church and state in relation to slavery, and in the statement that all in the Methodist

---

[75] Ibid., p. 188.

[76] Ibid., p. 188.

[77] Ibid., p. 190.

[78] Ibid., p. 193.

[79] Ibid., p. 193.

[80] Ibid., p. 194.

Church are connected with slavery, the southerners appear to be on solid ground in the light of the General Conference treatment of the issue of slavery from 1800 to 1840. Their argument about Church law, based on their appeal to the "compromise law," cannot be sustained in the sense that a compromise in the law of the Church was formulated and signed by all parties. It is true, nevertheless, that the actions of succeeding General Conferences give substance to the argument that a compromise had indeed been made.

Immediately after the "Protest of the Minority" was presented to the Conference, a committee was appointed to prepare a "Statement of the Facts connected with the Proceedings in the Case of Bishop Andrew."[81] The Protest focused on the history of the Church and slavery and the law of the Church that evolved in the continuing debate over slavery. The Reply attempts to meet the arguments in the Protest by giving a different interpretation to both history and law. This interpretation grants some of what the southerners say, but tries to establish that both history and law support the northern claim that the Conference has jurisdiction over the bishops. Thus, they admit that the General Conference has "indulged the South,"[82] and grant that exceptions to the general rule have been granted when state laws will not admit of emancipation. The major thrust of their argument is to insist that the office of bishop is set apart from the ministry, and thus does not fall within the laws that govern ministers. To support this argument, they put great stress on the fact that no slaveholder had ever been elected bishop and the peculiar relation of the General Conference to the bishops.

---

[81] Ibid., p. 113.

[82] Ibid., p. 204.

In tracing the history of the attitude of the Church to slave-holding bishops, they point out that of nine bishops elected who were natives of the United States, three were from the North, six from the South. This is taken to be a sign that though "... much more than their just claim has been conceded to the slaveholding portions of the church, a decided and uniform repugnance has, from the first been felt and manifested to the occupancy of that high office by a slaveholder." Furthermore, they point out that Bishop Andrew was elected because he would be acceptable to the North as a non-slaveholder, and emphasize the point by saying, "Bishop Andrew himself perfectly understood the ground of his election, and often said that he was indebted to this poverty for his promotion...."[83] In the Reply, the committee maintains that it has never heard of the "Compromise Law" referred to by the South.[84] Certainly, no compormise had ever been made on the question of a slaveholding bishop. The strongest part of their argument appears when they discuss the relation of the General Conference to the office of bishop. They bring forth substantial evidence to support their contention that the bishops are subject to the General Conference.[85]

---

[83] Ibid., p. 199.

[84] Ibid., p. 203.

[85] Ibid., pp. 206-208.

Despite the validity of their argument here, the pre-Conference publicity on the Andrew case and the actions taken by the General Conference make it clear that the southerners rightly understood the General Conference action on this issue as a repudiation of the arrangement in the Church that had preserved an uneasy harmony between slave and non-slaveholding portions of the Church. The Protest of the Minority had challenged any who did not wish to be associated with slavery to purify themselves by leaving. The Reply acknowledges the strong possibility of division in a closing passage that attempts to place the responsibility for any division on the South.

> . . . Who first introduced slavery into the Episcopacy? And the answer will be, Not the General Conference. Who opposed the attempt to withdraw it from the Episcopacy? Not the General Conference. Who reisted the measure of peace that was proposed -- the mildest that the case allowed? Not the majority. Who first sounded the knell of division, and declared that it would be impossible longer to remain under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church? Not the majority.[86]

On June 8, the General Conference adopted twelve resolutions prepared by a committee of nine in the event that a separation should occur. The southern conferences did move toward separation following the Conference, and the twelve resolutions became the Plan of Separation. The committee of nine saw separation as "not improbable," and presented the resolutions to the conference with the declaration, ". . . we esteem it the duty of this General Conference to meet the emergency with Christian kindness and the strictest equity. . . "[87] The resolutions dealt with the boundaries of the two prospective bodies, with the right of ministers to choose whichever body they preferred, and with the division of the book fund and other property.[88] The resolution on boundaries attempted to establish two areas that would remain unmolested by efforts to set up new parishes or exercise pastoral care outside of the assigned area. This was later to be the source of great competition and contention, often violated. Of the twelve resolutions, eight dwelt on the equitable division of the capital and property of the Methodist Book Concern. This was not only the major property held in common by the entire Church, but it was the source of most of the support for such things as the pension fund. The number of resolutions attests to its importance.

---

[86] Ibid., p. 210.

[87] Ibid., p. 135.

Separation did not occur in 1844 in any legal sense, and, indeed, the delegates were not certain that it would occur. In retrospect, it is clear that the General Conference of 1844 did in fact mark the Separation, although several succeeding events were necessary to make it an established fact. The annual conferences in the slaveholding states voted in favor of the Plan of Separation and an organizing convention was held in May, 1845. In 1846, the first General Conference of the Church, South, was held. In 1848, the northern Church repudiated the Plan of Separation at the General Conference. It was the northern contention that the Plan would not be valid until adopted by the required number of annual conferences. The Plan has been rejected in the North. In consequence, the issue went to the Federal Courts, centering on the Methodist Book Concern, the common property. Finally, on April 25, 1854, the Supreme Court concluded the issue by ruling that the General Conference had legal authority to dissolve the Church and the Plan of Separation was legal.[89] Thus, separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church was finally consummated in secular law courts over the issue of money.

---

[88] Ibid., pp. 135-137.

Evaluation of the Separation of 1844

The Separation of 1844 was an action taken in the midst of contending pressures demanding that the Church side with the pro-slavery or the antislavery forces. Either course of action necessarily was to lead to the separation of a large segment of the Church. The course taken promised the greater immediate numerical separation. However, if the northern moderates had voted with the southern delegates, the tempo of secession in the North would have increased, and there would have been no assurance that a separation along North-South lines was not to occur at a later date. Furthermore, tensions over slavery were increasing in the nation, sides were being taken, and pressures toward sectional loyalties were growing. The Separation of 1844 stands almost as an isolated act in a long train of events. The position taken by northern delegates at the General Conference of 1844 reversed a hands-off policy toward slavery that had developed over the four previous decades. In at least four General Conferences succeeding that of 1844, the Methodist Episcopal Church refused to take strong action against slave-holding members because of the competition with the Church, South, for members in the border states.

---

[89] Moore, John M., The Long Road to Methodist Union, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York-Nashville, 1943, pp. 44-48.

Several possible courses of action were open to the Church in the first half of the nineteenth century in regard to slavery. One possibility was the reassertion of the strong stand taken against slavery in 1784. The likely result of this course would have been the development of two geographically distinct separate churches. The growth of Methodism in the South might have been enhanced by such a course because it would have eliminated the antislavery stigma that Methodists bore with them at least through the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Another path might have involved recognition of participation in an evil based upon a realistic assessment of the probable impact of the Church's position on the institution of slavery. This position might have been coupled with efforts to improve the condition of the slaves and a strong sense of a responsibility to attempt to hold the nation together. The third option, the course taken, was the compromise of a strong antislavery position in order to make the Church palatable to South to enhance the possibilities for the growth of Methodism as a strong, national body.

The period leading to the Separation of 1844 must be seen as a long period of compromise of principle to maintain unity. As we have seen, the compromise was not a program rationally selected and agreed upon at any particular time. Rather, the position that embodied the compromise was worked out over a period of forty years, culminating in the actions of the General Conference of 1840. The Separation of 1844 does not represent a sudden great moral outpouring against the evils of slavery; rather, it represents the failure of the compromise to achieve its purpose. The Church tried to give lip service to an anti-slavery position at the same time that it yielded more and more to the pro-slavery forces.

In the first forty years of the nineteenth century, the position of the Church was determined by the requirements of unity. In 1844, the action of the General Conference was forced by contending pressures. After 1844 until the Civil War was nearly over, the Church refused attempts to reiterate its strong antislavery position of 1784 because of the competition for members on the border states. When these things are taken together, we are presented with a pattern of action characterized by reaction to the pressures of social forces. In the light of this history, it may be fairly said that in the period culminating in the Separation of 1844 the Methodist Episcopal Church failed to face squarely the moral issue of slavery.

Although southern Church commentators have always argued to the contrary, it must be said that slavery was a primary cause of the Separation. To be sure, it was coupled with the problem of Church Government, but no other issue had strained relations between northern and southern Methodists as did slavery. The journals yield no other likely cause of a break. Despite the fact that the breach did occur over slavery, the documents indicate that neither before nor after 1844 did the Church take the lead on, or even wholeheartedly support, the anti-slavery position. The action taken in 1844 certainly cannot be seen as the necessary end of a consistent pattern of General Conference actions. As we have seen, the Church moved consistently toward the action in 1840, when it stated that slaveholding would not be a bar to any grade of the ministry. Nor can the action of 1844 be seen as a rejection on moral grounds of the former actions of the Church because it had suddenly been presented with insistent and completely unacceptable new demands from the slaveholding states. Bishop Andrew's slaves certainly presented a difficult problem in terms of the accepted practice and provided ammunition for the abolitionists. In the light of what had already been accepted, however, it did not present a problem grave enough in itself to cause a breach. No slave owner had been elected bishop, it is true, but the legislation passed in 1840 was ambiguous enough that a bishop could have been included, if desired.

The decisive factor in the interim between 1840 and 1844 that had such an impact on the Conference in 1844 was the rapid increase in abolitionist sentiment and the threat that this posed to the unity of the Church in the North. Northern churchmen had approved a position supportive of slavery in order to prevent a breach in the unity of the Church. Now the Wesleyan Methodist secession presented them with a threat from another quarter, and they were faced with a choice of sectional separation or probable loss of large portions of the Church in the North. When efforts to pacify the Church or postpone action failed by a very close vote, the delegates from the North rejected their former coalition with southern delegates and voted against them. This happened in the Harding and Andrew cases and in the rescinding of the resolution on colored testimony.

In the General Conferences of 1832, 1836, and 1840, one of the explicit grounds on which abolitionist agitation was suppressed was the threat that this posed to the unity of the nation. It was clear even then that the Union was in jeopardy, and the argument was made that what happened in the Church might affect the national situation. In the light of the position taken from 1800 to 1840, and in terms of the importance of Church unity to the nation, consistency in the North would have demanded preservation of the national Church at the peril of substantial loss of members and ministers in the North. It is clear that the rapid growth of antislavery sentiment throughout the North played a part in the reversal of position in 1844. Nevertheless, the records of the General Conference of 1844 demonstrate that decisive action was taken only after efforts at moderation or amelioration failed.

Any alternative course of action to the one taken by the Church in the period leading to the Separation would have required facing the moral issues with the consequent risk to expansion and preservation of a strong, national Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Separation of 1844 can be viewed as the product of a compromise that failed, a compromise that had been developed over a period of forty years. It may be said that there was compromise on two counts, in that either of two paths might have been morally defensible.

The refusal to compromise on an issue labelled morally evil would obviously have considerable support in Scripture and tradition. The morality of rejection of any form of association with slavery would have been strengthened if accompanied by consistent efforts to change the laws and improve the lot of the slaves. The course selected by the Church could have been defended morally, as well. It has certainly been the consistent position of major theologians and large segments of the Church that order in society is essential for the very preservation of communal life and, beyond that, for the attainment of justice. Thus, the Methodists could have argued that a strong national ecclesiastical institution would serve to preserve the nation, as well as provide a platform from which slavery could be attacked.[90] Furthermore, the Church could have argued persuasively that any change as basic to society as cessation of slavery requires the support of the consensus of those most directly involved. This is especially so when the dispute is sectional and the minority is under pressure to change. This position was compromised by the sudden reversal of position in 1844 in the face of the threatened disunity in the North represented by the Wesleyan secession. The rapid capitulation to this pressure makes the arguments about preservation of the unity of the nation appear somewhat hollow. The unity of the Church was at all times primary.

---

[90] The history of the relation of the Church to society along the two major paths depicted above is clearly revealed in the work of Ernst Troeltsch in The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches. He demonstrates the manner in which various groups within the Church have chosen either a strong moral stance or accomodation to accomplish their ends. He sees both as necessary, and both as defensible. See Harper Torchbook edition, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960).

If the period leading to the Separation represents a compromise, on whom does the burden of responsibility for the compromise lie? Certainly it was not a southern compromise. The delegates from the slaveholding states had consistently demanded that the Church pass legislation that would insure that the Methodist label would not be a barrier to the work of the Church in the South. Though in the minority in the General Conference, it is clear that the southern delegates received the support that they sought. The compromise was not theirs. From 1832 on, perhaps even as early as 1828, the abolitionist voice began to be heard increasingly in the Church. It may be argued that abolitionists in the Church awoke rather late to the evil of slavery. The Methodist Episcopal Church had taken a stand against slavery in 1784, and other bodies, such as the Quakers, had opposed slavery for over a century. However, abolitionist sentiment did not develop to any great extent in the nation until the 1820's, and Methodist abolitionists were not alone in their shift to this position after early inaction or tacit support for slavery. Once they were persuaded of the moral rightness of abolition, they lost no time in making up for their earlier indifference.

The compromise in the period leading to the Separation of 1844 was the responsibility of the northern moderate and conservative churchman. The majority of delegates in the General Conferences were from non-slaveholding states. The bulk of these supported a conservative position that opted for expansion in the early period and, in coalition with the southerners, supressed the abolitionists in the decade and a half prior to separation. The continued unity of the Church depended upon this group, the majority of delegates from the area that came to be the northern Church. It was this group that reversed its stand in the interim between 1840 and 1844 under pressure of the secession in the North. It was this same conservative position that rejected strong antislavery legislation in the Conferences succeeding that of 1844. The compromise was clearly a compromise on the part of the majority of northern churchmen.

We have spent a great deal of time tracing the history of the position of Methodism on slavery from the denomination's beginnings in the United States to the Separation of 1844. The detailed inspection, Conference by Conference, was necessary fully to understand how the Church's position developed and how the Separation of 1844 must be understood in the light of that development. The primary reason for having given so much attention to this phase of the history of the relation of the Church to slavery is that what happened in the period leading to the Separation, and in the Separation itself, is of central importance in understanding the Union of 1939, the debate over the Central Jurisdiction since Union, and efforts to rid Church institutions of segregation. It is the author's contention that what occurred in the early period, culminating in the Separation, has affected the entire history of the relation of the Church to Negroes since that time. It is not the Separation in itself that is so important, but the understanding of the Separation as compromise that must be kept in mind as we proceed.[91]

---

[91] Although the particular interpretation of the Separation as compromise is not discussed, several commentators view the Separation in a very positive light. John Nelson Norwood, in The Schism in the Methodist Episcopal Church: 1844, (New York: Alfred, 1923), holds the view that the General Conference of 1844 went about separation with Christian charity and kindness. Arthur Jones, in The History of American Methodism, (New York: Abingdon, 1964), vol II., p. 174, supports and expands this view when he says, "The Plan of Separation was thus officially pronounced dead. The tide of opposition which had been building since June of 1844 had attained overwhelming force, and, for better or for worse, the conference of 1848 had undone the work of the 1844 conference, which had been hailed then as Christian, charitable, and equitable. The verdict of history would seem to hold that the new step was mistaken but understandable. Legal questions aside, it is hard to disagree with Prof. Norwood when he says that 'the Plan was a wonderful exhibition of Christian charity, manifested in a situation as baffling as any that ever confronted a great religious assembly.'"

CHAPTER III.

THE NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO UNION

Our major task in this portion of our inspection of the history of the Methodists and Negroes is understanding of the nature of the Union that was consummated in 1939. The union of the three major branches of Methodism, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church, resulted in the formation of The Methodist Church. The direct result of the Union was the formation of one of the largest Protestant bodies in the United States. At the time, it symbolized the close of at least one phase of the long period of sectional dispute in the nation. That dispute, at last somewhat muted, was to flame again in post-World War II America with the rise of the Civil Rights movement. Methodism united should have offered a strong resource to the nation as sectional tension was renewed. This is especially true in view of the fact that the Presbyterians and Baptists remain divided along sectional lines to this day. In fact, the Church has been subjected to the same sectional tensions and conflict as the nation, and its response through Church agencies has been somewhat muted. Our understanding of this situation is dependent upon our understanding of what occurred in relation to Negroes at the time of Union in 1939.

What happened in 1939 was directly related to what happened at the time of the Separation in 1844. In the case of Bishop Andrew, the southern minority fought against two things; northern interference in the civil and social institution of slavery and the imposition of the control of the northern majority over the affairs of the minority in the Church. The issues concerning Negroes and Church government were integrally related in 1844 and 1939. The crucial issue in 1939 was, quite simply, the preservation of southern autonomy gained in 1844. The Methodist Church, South, had prospered in the hundred years since separation despite the very difficult period that followed the Civil War, and it was determined not to give up advantages gained in separation for the sake of unity.

Negotiations toward union began almost immediately upon cessation of hostilities in 1865. In all the deliberations that took place, the Church, South, consistently held to its demand that any arrangement must acknowledge and protect its autonomy and its social pattern in terms of Negroes. The jurisdictional system, which limited the power of the General Conference provided for segregation of Negroes from the local life of the Church, afforded the necessary protection. The limitations on the power of the General Conference take the form of powers and duties of the jurisdictional conferences, which are specified in Section IV of the Constitution of The Methodist Church.[1] Among the important powers and duties of the jurisdictional conferences which limit the power of the General Conference are the promotion of evangelistic, educational, missionary, and benevolent interests of the Church within the respective jurisdictions; the election of bishops; the establishment of jurisdictional conference boards as auxiliaries to the General Boards of the Church and the selection of jurisdictional representatives on the General Boards; the determination of boundaries of annual conferences within the respective jurisdictions; the establishment of rules and regulations for the administration of the work of the Church within the jurisdictions; and the appointment of a Committee on Appeals to hear and determine the appeal of a traveling preacher of that jurisdiction from the decision of a trial committee.

---

[1] The Constitution as originally ratified may be found in the _Journal of the Uniting Conference._ Successive editions of the _Discipline_ contain amendments to the Constitution and direct the reader to Judicial Council

Understanding of the Separation of 1844 was gained through tracing the development of the Methodist position on slavery in General Conference action from the founding of the American Methodist Church in 1784 up to the Separation. The nature of the Union of 1939 may be understood by focusing on the almost continuous negotiations toward Union from the end of the War to consummation of the Union. The negotiations must be seen against the background of what was happening in the nation and especially in the Church in the seventy-four years between 1865 and 1939.

---

decisions that interpret specific Sections or Articles of the Constitution. The 1964 edition of the Discipline reveals that neither amendment nor judicial procedure has changed the basic relationship of the jurisdictional conferences to the General Conference.

The Civil War ended in 1865, but the conflict between the two major Methodist bodies continued long after hostilities ended. The northern Church viewed the defeated South as open territory for missionary expansion. It followed the armies from the North into the South even before the War was over and disputes over its operations in the South continued for decades. The activities of the northern Church in the South only hardened the resolve of the Church, South, to protect what it had gained.

Although our attention will be focused on what was happening in terms of the relation of the Church to Negroes, we recognize that the attention of the Church and the nation was directed to many other causes and events. Some of these strongly affected the relation of the Church to Negroes. Thus the developments with which we are concerned took place in the framework of the Civil War, Reconstruction, World War I, and the Depression, all of which directly affected the social, economic, and political position of Negroes. In addition to the wars and major periods of social upheaval, the attention of the churches was directed to several causes and movements. Child labor, the long fight of labor for legal power and recognition, the temperance movement, and women's rights were causes that demanded and received the attention of the churches. The "Negro problem" was always there, but there were long periods in which the plight of Negroes was obscured for church and nation by more immediate concerns or conflicts.

Prior to the Civil War, the Methodist Episcopal Church had only minimal Negro membership, most of which was in the border states. The Church, South, by contrast, expanded its efforts among the slaves after separation and had over 200,000 Negro members by the time the Civil War began.[2] In 1846, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South affirmed the General Conference actions of 1836 and 1840, which accepted slavery as a civil institution and absolved southern Methodists from any penalty from association with slavery. There was continuing conflict over slavery in the North after 1844, but the competition with the Church, South, in the border states caused the defeat of abolitionist efforts.[3] The conflict caused considerable strain in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and at least one commentator suggests that another split might have occurred if the War had not intervened to unite the North in a larger struggle.[4] Finally, in 1860, a change was made in the General Rule on slavery. It was not until 1864, however, after the emancipation proclamation and near the end of the War, that the northern Church returned to the historic position of 1784 by requiring the expulsion of slaveholding members from the Church,

---

[2] The History of American Methodism, op. cit., II, p. 280.

[3] Ibid., p. 167. See 159-167 for full discussion of the border conflict.

[4] Ibid., p. 205.

The Civil War and Reconstruction wrought great changes in the relation of the two Methodist bodies to Negroes and severely strained the inter-church relations. What happened in and between the Church bodies in this period is of great importance in understanding the deliberations toward Union and the Union itself. In The Long Road to Methodist Union, Bishop John Moore rightly says,

> . . . The creative era of American Methodism is not the half century succeeding 1890, but that preceding. The platform of union had to be made of planks cut from the forests grown in that earlier period. No progress was made toward union or reunion until the factors that had to be embraced in the Plan were found and recognized.[5]

The importance of that period requires some extended comment.

The Church in the North and in the South understandably supported the war effort of their respective sections. The defeat of the Conferate Army was interpreted by the northern Church as the defeat of the Church, South, as well. Even before the war ended, the northern Church began to pick up the spoils of victory. Its move South began in earnest when the battles ended. In 1863, the Methodist Episcopal Church received authorization from Secretary of War Stanton to take possession of property of the Church, South, in the wake of the Union Army.[6] Although President Johnson terminated this arrangement in 1866, the northern Church looked upon the South as a prime field for expansion and missionary endeavor. It especially coveted the thousands of Negroes now living as freedmen in the South. Although its appeal to whites was not to be as effective, efforts were made, with some success, to enlist ministers and members of the Church, South, into the northern Church. Annual Conferences were established covering all of the former Confederacy, and a vast program of education for Negroes was undertaken. The friction caused by these efforts affected the negotiations between the two Church bodies for at least fifty years.

---

[5] op. cit., pp. 29-30.

[6] Ibid., II, pp. 249 and 299.

The efforts of The Methodist Church in the South in the post-war period were directed primarily to Negroes. It was these efforts and the problem of the disposition of the Negro members of the northern Church that were the fruits of the efforts that caused the greatest friction at the time of Union.[7] As the antiabolitionists had prophesied, the sudden termination of slavery flooded the nation with hundreds of thousands of people who had not been adequately prepared for citizenship. In addition to the lack of property and power, the Negroes were virtually uneducated. As Johnson points out, the need for education became apparent during the War, and in a unique combination of Federal funds and private relief agencies, teachers followed the troops into the South.[8]

---

[7] The work of the northern Church directed toward Negroes has been described and analyzed by Henry M. Johnson in an unpublished Ph. D. dissertation entitled "The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Education of Southern Negroes, 1862-1900," Yale University, 1939, and this work will serve as background for this introductory framework.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 207.

Methodists participated in these early efforts in the government programs and in nondenominational efforts. In 1866, however, a special convention was held in Cincinnati, and the Freedmen's Aid Society of The Methodist Episcopal Church was formed.[9] The Society was approved by the Annual Conferences, it was placed upon the lists of annual contributions, and auxiliary societies were formed in the various Conferences.[10]

There were at least four major reasons for the Methodist Episcopal Church to become involved in educational work with the freed slaves in the South: (1) a strong feeling of duty and responsibility for education and elevation of the emancipated slaves as fellow men, (2) a view that through educational endeavors the Church's evangelization program might prosper, (3) a sense of participation in the guilt of the institution of slavery, and (4) competition from Catholics and other Protestant denominations. Johnson puts prime emphasis on the sense of religious duty.[11] Although this factor was undoubtedly important, it is clear that the possibilities for Church extension made acceptance of that responsibility much more urgent and palatable.

Other denominations had begun to proceed with their own educational efforts rather than join in or continue with the nondenominational efforts started near the end of the War. In addition to the competition from primarily white, northern denominations, the Church's evangelization efforts among Negroes had to meet a strong challenge from the African Methodist Episcopal (A. M. E.) and African Methodist Episcopal Zion (A. M. E. Zion) Churches, which had been limited almost exclusively to the North prior to emancipation. These two bodies posed a more direct challenge to the northern Church than did the other white churches. Five years after the end of the War, the Church, South, separated formally from its Negro members and aided in the formation and support of the Colored Methodist Episcopal (C. M. E.) Church. The extent and success of competition for emancipated Negroes among northern white and Negro members is attested to partially by the fact that the C. M. E. Church had at its founding only about one-third of the Negroes that were in the Church, South, when the Civil War began. Not all of the remaining two-thirds stayed in the South or joined other churches, but a large proportion did so. Some statistics cited by Johnson indicate the extent to which the Church became involved in this effort. From the founding of the Freedmen's Aid Society in 1866 until the turn of the century, the northern Church spent $5, 303, 841 on the educational program in the southern states.[12] Some work done with whites was included in this figure, but the great majority of effort and money was expended on Negroes. By the end of the century, the Methodists had enrolled 125, 000 students in their institutions and

---

[9] Ibid., p. 241.

[10] Ibid., p. 253.

[11] Ibid., p. 260.

---

[12] Ibid., p. 312.

10,000 were under instruction in 1900.[13] Some of the institutions started became colleges and are still in operation today. A large number that began as primary and secondary schools were turned over to southern states and formed a nucleus of the public school system.

The increased involvement of the northern Church in the South, especially in educational work with emancipated slaves, coincided with, and gave impetus to, a complete break of the Church, South, with its former Negro members. The formal separation of Negro and white Methodists occurred in 1870, when the C. M. E. Church was formed. There are indications that the separation was supported by both sides. The whites felt that the changed relations between the races in the political, economic, and social spheres necessitated a rearrangement of relations within the Church. The Negroes, on their part, showed some signs of wanting a separate organization. In addition, they were under extreme pressure from northern Negro and white denominations to leave the Church of their former slave masters and join one of those groups competing for their allegiance. The argument about breaking ties with their former masters was especially telling when it came from such denominations as the A. M. E. and A. M. E. Zion.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, did not break all ties immediately, however. It continued to supply administrative assistance until Negro leaders were elected, it gave some financial aid, and it granted the church property to Negro congregations transferring to the new denomination. The southerners were quite concerned about trying to keep the Negro Methodists together in one organization, if possible.

---

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 488.

As the northern efforts increased, however, the southerners reacted by withdrawing most of their financial support. There were several contributing factors. First, the southerners were extremely poor following the War. Their farms had been ravaged, livestock was gone, and their economy was decimated. They had all they could do to maintain existence, and even their own churches suffered badly for the first decade or two. Second, they held the northerners responsible for their troubles and the termination of slavery. They agreed with the northern sentiment that the North had a responsibility to the emancipated slaves. The southerners were bitter in addition to being poor and were quite willing to let the North invest its funds in the support of Negro education and churches. Third, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was now free of the encumbrance that slavery had put on its evangelizing efforts and free of the financial drain as well. The Church, South, was ready to rebuild and prosper as the South recovered, now completely identified with the white South.

With this as background, we move to the events that led to Union. The possibility of re-union was raised almost immediately after the War. In the light of the continuing conflict between the two Methodist bodies, it is surprising that the question was raised at all in the nineteenth century. The controversy in the border states that arose between

1844 and the War continued, and the northern Church was attempting to expand its evangelization to whites as well as Negroes in states of the old Confederacy. The negotiations that did take place in the nineteenth century always centered on questions of disputed property and the continual incursion of the North into territory the Church, South, felt rightfully its own. Despite all of the barriers, however, negotiations were begun, and the basis for the eventual Union was laid.

Our study of the negotiations leading to Union will be based on documents from major meetings between Commissions appointed by the two Episcopal Methodisms and on two important interpretations of the process leading to the Union. Bishop John Moore was a participant in many of the deliberations in this century, and he was the Chairman of the Commission of the Church, South, in the final stages of the Union process. Bishop Moore's book, The Long Road to Methodist Union, is especially helpful in interpreting the Union from a southern viewpoint.[14] This viewpoint is essential for our understanding of both the Union and the controversy over the Central Jurisdiction in the period after the Union. "Attempts Toward Unification of the Methodist Episcopal Church and The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1865-1926," by Aubrey G. Walton, is a careful study of the major steps in the movement toward Union up to 1926, a time when success was in doubt.[15] Our major effort here is to understand the significance of the agreement resulting in the Union for the period that followed.

---

[14] Moore, op. cit.

[15] Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Duke University, 1931.

The first important contact between the two Methodist bodies occurred in 1869, four years after the Civil War. Individual Annual Conferences had sent greetings to the General Conference of the Church, South, in 1866, but in 1869 two bishops from the northern Church attended a meeting of southern bishops of the Church, South, as official delegates from the North. The message that the northern bishops bore was an invitation to reunion. In a passage which clearly indicates the northern interpretation of what occurred in 1844, the message quoted a statement adopted by the northern bishops in 1865 which said,

> That the great cause which led to the separation from us of both the Wesleyan Methodists of this country and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has passed away, and we trust the day is not far distant when there shall be but one organization, which shall embrace the whole Methodist family of the United States.[16]

In their reply, the Church, South, politely specified two basic points of understanding of what had happened in 1844 on which the North erred. They disagreed, first, with the view that slavery had been the cause of the separation, and second, that the Church, South, had separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The southerners maintained that the two Churches must be one in spirit prior to the establish-

---

[15] Formal Fraternity, Proceedings of the General Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1872, 1874, and 1876, and of the Joint Commission of the Two Churches on Fraternal Relations, at Cape May, New Jersey, Aug. 16-23, 1876, (New York: Nelson and Phillips, n. d.), p. 9.

ment of one organization and called for fraternal relations as a first step.[17] In these passages from their reply we get a clear picture of their position and see the first example of the manner in which the South was going to take the lead in establishing the terms of negotiations.

> It may help to the more speedy and certain attainment of the ends we both desire to keep distinctly in mind our mutual positions, and to hold the facts involved in our common history in a clear light.
>
> You say that 'the great cause which led to the separation from us of both the Wesleyan Methodists of this country and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has passed away.' If we understand your reference, we so far differ from you in this opinion, that it may help any negotiations hereafter taking place to restate our position. Slavery was not, in any proper sense, the cause, but the occasion only of that separation, the necessity of which we regretted as much as you. But certain principles were developed in relation to the political aspects of that question, involving the right of ecclesiastical bodies to handle and determine matters lying outside of their proper jurisdiction, which we could not accept; and, in a case of arising, certain constructions of the constitutional powers and prerogatives of the General Conference were assumed and acted on, which we considered oppressive and destructive of the rights of the numerical minority represented in that highest judicatory of the Church. That which you are pleased to call, no doubt sincerely thinking it so, 'the great cause' of separation, existed in the Church from its organization, and yet for sixty years there was no separation. But when those theories incidentally envolved in connection with it began to be put into practice, then the separation came.
>
> We cannot think you mean to offend us when you speak of our having separated from you, and put us in the same category with a small body of schismatics who were always an acknowledged secession. Allow us, in all kindness, brethren, to remind you, and to keep the important fact of history prominent, that we separated from you in no sense in which you did not separate from us. The separation was by compact and mutual, and nearer approaches to each other can be conducted with hope of a successful issue only on this basis.[18]

---

[17] Ibid., p. 10.

[18] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

We have mentioned previously that slavery and the authority of the General Conference were inextricably tied up in the case of Bishop Andrew. In the quoted passage, we see the emphasis that the South put on the issue of General Conference authority. We emphasized in the previous chapter that slavery must be understood as a primary cause of separation, and not merely "incidentally envolved" with separation. The Church, South, however, consistently argued that it was the oppressive power of the General Conference in the hands of a northern majority which caused the rupture. We may accept the reasons for using that argument, but we cannot accept the argument itself. In all succeeding efforts, it was to put some form of protection of sectional control at the center of all considerations. Although the jurisdictional structure was not formulated until much later, the concept had been mentioned by the South as early as 1846.[19]

Protection of autonomy in the Church and protection of the civil and social relation of segregation which replaced slavery were closely intertwined. As the first step, the South began to lay the groundwork for the acceptance of the understanding that separation had been mutual and not merely a southern act. This was very important, because once the onus was off the South, and discussion moved to union of two recognized, equal bodies, the Church, South, was in a better bargaining position. In the reply to the northern bishops, mention was made of the incursion of northern Methodists into the South and the difficulties that was causing in attempts to re-establish relations. This question of northern evangelization, hinging on members and Church property, was to cause friction for a number of decades.[20]

---

[19] Moore, op. cit., p. 76.

The southern bishops had indicated that the two Churches must be one in Spirit before they could be one organization. This position was emphasized by the General Conference of the Church, South, in 1870, when it responded to a Commission from the North by rejecting their efforts toward union, but indicating again their own interest in fraternal relations.

> . . . if this distinguished Commission were fully clothed with authority to treat with us for union, it is the judgment of this Conference that the true interests of the Church of Christ require and demand the maintenance of our separate and distinct organizations.
> . . . we tender to Rev. Bishop E. S. Janes and Rev. W. L. Harris, the members of the Commission now present with us, our high regards as brethren beloved in the Lord and express our sincere desire that the day may soon come when proper Christian sentiments and fraternal relations between the two great branches of Northern and Southern Methodism shall be permanently established.[21]

Subsequently, fraternal delegates were sent South in 1874 and the General Conference that received them appointed a Commission to meet with a like body from the North on fraternity.[22] The southern Commission was received at the General Conference of the northern Church in 1876, and out of this exchange it was decided to hold a special meeting at Cape May, New Jersey. The Cape May Commission, as it came to be called, sought closer relations and attempted to deal with the thorny problem of disputed property by making rules to cover the disputes and adjust property claims.[23] Beyond the formal establishment of fraternal relations, the Cape May Commission stands as a landmark in the movement towards Union because it firmly established the status of the two Methodist bodies. The Commission adopted a declaration testifying to the co-ordinate relation of the two churches as legitimate branches of Episcopal Methodism.

---

[20] It is worth noting that two of the three orders of business for the meeting dealt specifically with property matters. Formal Fraternity, op. cit., p. 66.

[21] Ibid., p. 18.

> Each of said Churches is a legitimate Branch of Episcopal Methodism in the United States, having a common origin in the Methodist Episcopal Church organized in 1784.

---

[22] The southerners again reiterated their interest in fraternity and their express opposition to union. Their reply to the northern delegation said, in part, "Organic union is not involved in fraternity. In our view of the subject, the reasons for the separate existence of these two Branches of Methodism are such as to make corporate union undesirable and impracticable. The events and experiences of the last thirty years have confirmed us in the conviction that such a consummation is demanded by neither reason nor charity. We believe that each Church can do its work and fulfill its mission most effectively by maintaining an independent organization. The causes which led to the division in 1844, upon a Plan of Separation mutually agreed upon, have not disappeared. Some of them exist in their original form and force, and others have been modified, but not diminished." Among the causes they cited the size of the denomination and General Conference as unwieldy and the domination of the General Conference by the northern majority. They reiterated the consistent southern position that slavery was but an occasion of the Separation, not a cause. Ibid., pp. 37-38.

[23] Walton, op. cit., p. 73.

> Since the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was consummated in 1845, by the voluntary exercise of the right of the Southern Annual Conferences, ministers and members, to adhere to that Communion, it has been an evangelical Church, reared on scriptural foundations, and her ministers and members, with those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, have constituted one Methodist family, though in distinct ecclesiastical connections.[24]

In this statement, the Church, South, was recognized as a legitimate, autonomous body, and all stigma of rebellion was removed from it. Furthermore, the North relinguished, in a formal sense at least, its claim to being the true heir to the historic Methodist Church. There were voices in the North that disputed the legitimacy of the Church, South, but the agreement was approved by both bodies by 1880.[25] The central importance of the declaration of the Cape May Commission may be seen in the following comment on it by Bishop Moore.

> This declaration, adopted by both Churches, that each is a legitimate branch of the original Methodist Episcopal Church and each is equal to the other in succession to the original, that the two are twin Sisters in Episcopal Methodism, was the answer to thirty years of questions, contentions, disputes, and conflicts. It removed from the Church South the stigma of "secession." It supported the position of the Federal Court that the General Conference of 1844 was competent to divide the Church and that it did divide it. It recognized the independent and legitimate

---

[24] Formal Fraternity, op. cit., p. 67. An exchange of letters between the Commissions of the respective bodies prior to the joint meeting at Cape May virtually guaranteed that such a declaration would be adopted. The southerners proposed the recognition of its legitimacy. Although the northerners reserved approbation of the entire southern interpretation of the relation of the two bodies and the history of separation, they indicated in advance that they could agree to an endorsement of each church as a legitimate branch of Methodism. See pages 60-64.

[25] See Neely, Bishop Thomas A., American Methodism, Its Divisions and Unification, (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1915).

> standing of the Church South. It was the most epoch-making utterance and action in Methodist history since 1844, and even for the succeeding half century and more. It put the two bodies upon a plane of equality, fraternity, and liberty that made possible a new common life. Its importance, influence, and effect cannot be overestimated. It is the golden milestone at the head of the highway that leads to unity and union in American Methodism.[26]

The next major move toward Union occurred in the 1890's. The Second Ecumenical Methodist Conference met in Washington in 1891, and the discussion there about union for all gave impetus to the reunion of North and South.[27] Three years later, a Commission was appointed at the General Conference of the Church, South, to work on "abating hurtful competitions and the waste of men and money in home and foreign fields."[28] The northern Church responded by adopting a Commission on Federation in 1896, and a Joint Commission on Federation met for the first time in 1898. It is interesting to note that the South took the initiative as it had in the move towards formal fraternal relations. The northern Church could have acted at its General Conference of 1892. In itself this is of minor significance, but in the total picture, it is one more small bit of evidence that the Church, South, was determining the nature of the relations between the two Churches, as it had in the period leading to the Separation. The move toward federation in the

---

[26] Moore, op. cit., pp. 65-6. [27] Walton, op. cit., p. 82.

[28] Ibid., p. 88. It is worth noting that the "Rules for the Adjustment of Adverse Claims to Church Property" had been adopted unanimously at Cape May in 1876, and it was believed that such support would end property disputes. Formal Fraternity, op. cit., pp. 69-70 and 76.

1890's was very practically based, and the Commission worked out recommendations, later approved, on the joint administration of publishing interests in China and Japan, advised consideration of joint missionary endeavor, recommended preparation of common order of public worship, and proposed a means of transfer and acceptance of the credentials of a minister from one body to another.[29] The northern Church rejected a proposed agreement limiting expansion efforts at its General Conference in 1900, but finally adopted it in 1904 after the Church, South, reiterated its position. This caused a delay of four years in the approval of the Commission's recommendations.[30]

The Joint Commission on Federation met again in 1910, and for the first time the northern Church took the initiative by announcing that the General Conference of 1908 had empowered them to take steps toward union with other Methodist bodies and the United Brethren as well.[31] Delegates from the Methodist Protestant Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met and worked out a tentative, elaborate plan for union which was approved by the three participating bodies.[32] The adopted plan served as the framework of expanded discussion in 1911. What is of importance to us is that in 1911, after a number of strong statements about the impossibility of any union in which Negroes had an equal place, an amendment to the basic suggestions stipulated that a separate jurisdictional conference be established for Negroes.[33] This relationship was part of the final report approved by the Joint Commission in Chattanooga in May, 1911.[34] It is clear from the records that the place of Negroes played a central role in the deliberations.

---

[29] E. E. Hoss and Frank M. Thomas (ed.), A Record of All Agreements Concerning Fraternity and Federation Between the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and Declaration in Favor of Unification Made by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1914), pp. 21-22.

[30] Ibid., pp. 22-24.

[31] Walton, op. cit., p. 106f.

[32] A Record of All Agreements, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

---

[33] The Joint Commission adopted a report which included a provision linking Church structure and the place of Negroes. "We suggest that the governing power of the reorganized Church shall be vested in one General Conference and three or four Quadrennial Conferences, both General and Quadrennial Conferences to exercise their powers under constitutional provisions and restrictions, the General Conference to have full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional, and the Quadrennial Conferences to have full legislative power over distinctively local affairs. We suggest that the colored membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, and such organizations of colored Methodists as may enter into agreement with them may be constituted and recognized as one of the Quadrennial or Jurisdictional Conferences of the proposed reorganization." A Record of All Agreements, op. cit., p. 42. At the succeeding General Conference of the Church, South, the procedures adopted by the Commission were generally approved as a basis for unification. In regard to Negroes, however, it was recommended that "the colored membership of the various Methodist bodies be formed into an independent organization holding fraternal relations with the reorganized and united Church." Ibid., p. 59.

[34] Moore, op. cit., See Chapter Five for various plans set forth and some of the individual statements made. See p. 110 for the amendment on a separate jurisdiction.

The meetings in 1910 and 1911 were the real beginning of the move to Union. In 1916 a Joint Commission on Unification met for the first of yearly meetings from 1916 to 1920. Through the long process of negotiation, several major organizational plans were debated. All of the plans took cognizance of two things, however. First, the autonomy of the individual bodies was going to be preserved by limiting the General Conference to certain specified powers. Second, colored members of the Church were going to be in a separate jurisdiction. In some suggested plans the Negroes were to join other colored denominations and be out of the Methodist Church altogether, in others they were to have a separate jurisdiction with no vote at the General Conference, and in others they were to be separated, but have vote at the General Conference. Whatever form the plan of union was to take, however, it became absolutely clear that interests of the southern minority and the social relation of Negroes and whites in the South were to be structured into the Church.[35] The importance of these issues is seen in the agenda adopted at the first meeting of the Joint Commission on Unification in 1916. Three major committees were established, being The Committee on the Judicial Council, The Committee on Conferences, and The Committee on the Status of the Colored Membership in the Reorganized Church.[36]

---

[35] Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

[36] *Joint Commission on Unification of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church*, So(New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1918), I., pp. 187 and 197.

The Joint Commission held extensive meetings over a period of five years. Throughout the meetings, the related issues of autonomy and the place of Negroes played a central role.[37] In order to protect autonomy, the South continued to argue for the jurisdictional system. In addition, it pressed strongly for some form of judicatory body that would not be subject to the control of the General Conference. The suggestion of a judicial system had appeared earlier and had been one of the proposals put forth by the representatives of the Church, South, in the meetings held in 1911. The formation of The Committee on the Judicial Council as one of the three major committees of the Joint Commission indicates the importance of the proposed Judicial Council in the negotiations. Finally, a Constitution was drafted and sent to the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for action upon it.[38] The draft Constitution included the jurisdictional structure, the separate jurisdiction for Negroes, and the Judicial Council.[39] The Church, South, adopted the plan, but the northern Church called for a further convention to discuss it. A simplified plan, including Negroes in one of the jurisdictional conferences and with vote in the General Conference was finally approved in 1924 by General Conference action in North and South. All that remained was approval from the annual conferences.

---

[37] The importance of the place of Negroes to the entire deliberations can be seen from the extended debates on the issue contained in the reports from the Joint Commission on Unification. See, for example, Vol. I., pp. 130-184, and Vol. II., pp. 100-388. These pages deal with this issue only.

[38] The Methodist Protestant Church elected to stand aside during this period to allow the major differences between the two bodies to be worked out. It was satisfied that its interests had been considered and protected in the agreements reached in 1910 and 1911.

[39] Moore, _op. cit._, pp. 149-160.

Walton discusses at length the fight that developed in the southern annual conferences. Five southern bishops pushed against adoption in the conferences under their jurisdiction. As Walton describes it, ". . . The chief arguments used against unification were that its adoption would bring about the equality of the Negro with white delegates in the General Conference, and that the Methodist Episcopal Church was modern and heretical in its views. . . ."[40] Approval in the North required a vote of two-thirds in the Annual Conferences, and 18,000 out of 19,000 voting gave it approval. In the South, where three-fourths approval was required, a majority of voters approved the plan 4,528 to 4,108. The majority was not enough and the plan failed. Three-fourths of the dissenting votes in the South came from the conferences under the five bishops opposed to the plan.[41] The centrality of the issue of the place of Negroes in the Church is seen in the following summary comments by Walton,

> In the first place, slavery was the chief cause of the division of the Church in 1844.[42]

---

[40] Walton, op. cit., p. 188.

[41] Ibid., pp. 192-3.

[42] Ibid., p. 199.

> The chief arguments used against the plan (of 1925) had their roots in sectional jealousy and racial prejudice -- which is clearly the result of feelings aroused during the Civil War and the period of Reconstruction. The section of the country most strongly opposed to unification suffered extremely because of the Civil War and the subsequent carpet bag and Negro regime.[43]

> Thus, it is quite clear that the Negro, who was largely responsible for the division of the Church in 1844, was also one of the chief stumbling blocks to the unification of episcopal Methodism in 1925. The opponents to the proposed plan argued that unification would result in racial equality in the episcopacy, the General Conference and the Church, which they claimed Southern Methodists could not endure. By playing, in this manner, upon the racial prejudices of certain sections in which hatred against the Negro was aroused to white heat during the days of Reconstruction, those opposed to the plan were able to use this argument to great advantage in the defeat of unification.[44]

After the defeat in the South, exhaustion and despair apparently set in, and the matter lay fallow for several years. Finally, in 1934, new efforts were undertaken and by the Fall of 1935, the plan that was finally accepted was completed. Agreement was obtained from the three bodies, and the Uniting Conference was held in 1939. In the final Plan of Union, six jurisdictional conferences were designated, five on geographical basis, one on the basis of race. The Negroes did gain such concessions as the right to vote in General Conference. The establishment of the Central Jurisdiction as one of the six jurisdictions gave Negroes a wide range of control over their own activities in the Church, and, more important, considerable representation on the General Boards and in the General Conference of The Methodist Church.

---

[43] Ibid., p. 201.

[44] Ibid., p. 202.

Evaluation of the Union of 1939

What is the nature of the Union? The Union may be termed a moral compromise because it could not have been achieved without the agreement of The Methodist Episcopal Church to the segregation of Negroes from the life of the Church at any but the national level, at least in those geographical areas where the majority of Negro Methodists lived. As in the period leading to the Separation of 1844, the compromise was a northern compromise. The Church, South, determined the relation of the two churches during the period, choosing fraternity rather than union until its stature as a co-equal body was recognized and a plan guaranteeing its conditions was formulated. On the issue of race, the South consistently refused to yield. As in the earlier period, the North was caught in a conflict between the desire for a strong national denomination and its principle on race. The significance of the parallels in the period leading to the Separation and the period leading to the Union for our analysis of the Central Jurisdiction dispute cannot be too heavily underscored.

The issue of regional autonomy was central to all of the negotiations. That issue, however, was inextricably related to the question of the place of Negroes in The Methodist Church. The centrality of the question of colored members is attested to by a number of commentators. We have already seen what Walton had to say in his work devoted to analysis of the deliberations. In his discussion of the Plan of Union, William Warren Sweet says, "...A Sixth Jurisdiction was to be composed of the Negro membership of the former Methodist Episcopal church, a provision without which Union could not have been accomplished. . . "[45] In a paper entitled, "The Negro in the Unification of American Methodism," Lawrence O. Kline says, ". . . One fact emerged very quickly. Despite all the manifold problems and complexities involved in the unification of the two Methodisms, the principal issue separating them, and the one on which unification would either succeed or fail, was the Negro in the Methodist Episcopal Church."[46] Bishop Moore agrees with these comments in his analysis of the movement toward Union. He stresses the essential aspect of regional autonomy in the light of the history of the North-South conflict, and then links the issue of the Negro directly to that when he says,

> In the final analysis this principle and provision of distribution of power was the chief obstacle to union. The Southern Commissioners believed to the end that the Regional Conference was not only essential to union but also to any satisfactory and adequate administration of the Church and of the highest promotion of its work. The South in its governmental philosophy followed Thomas Jefferson rather than Alexander Hamilton. The states' rights in legislation and administration were supported. Regional life with its homogeneity and distinctive traits was regarded as contributory to the broader and finer expression of national thought and culture. The South for over a century had believed in the first-rank quality and worth of its white citizenship and had built and maintained its civilization on that belief. . . . (emphasis added.)[47]

---

[45] Methodism in American History, (New York: Abingdon, Rev. Ed. 1953), p. 398.

[46] Paper presented to Church History Club, Drew University, March 17, 1964, p. 1, also in The Drew Gateway, Spring, 1964, pp. 128-149.

[47] Moore, op. cit., pp. 148-149.

Bishop Moore's analysis of the southern position in the negotiations leading to Union and his interpretation of the Union from a southerner's point of view is important to this study in that it supports our reading of the events of this period. Although we cannot support his interpretation of the relationship of slavery to the Separation of 1844, the position and goals of the Church, South, as rendered by the Chairman of the Commission of the Church, South, are of supreme importance to our understanding of this period and the nature of the Union.

There was opposition in the North to any union based on segregation. The northern Church had expended great sums of money and tremendous effort to win Negro members. Most of these Negroes were in the South. Kline points out that the number of Negroes in the Methodist Episcopal Church jumped from 18, 139 in 1865 to 175, 112 by the end of Reconstruction.[48] At the time of Union, there were about 300, 000 Negro members, the majority of whom lived in the South.[49] There was strong sentiment in the North that segregation at the local level was in fact a moral compromise. Seventeen of the nineteen Negro Conferences voted against the Plan of Union, despite vocal support for union by some of the leaders of the Negro membership.[50] Kline suggests that many northerners who viewed segregation as moral compromise were persuaded to vote for the Plan of Union because it contained provisions for later change.[51] Such provisions were included, but as we shall see, they put an effective veto power against change leading to integration at the Conference or local level in the hands of those to be directly affected.

---

[48] op. cit., p. 2.

[49] Frederick A. Shippey, Selected Work Documents, prepared for The Commission For Study and Action of the Jurisdictional System. (The Methodist Church, Copyright 1960, Frederick A. Shippey), p. 38, indicates that there were 308, 577 members of the Central Jurisdiction in 1940. There were undoubtedly other Negroes in the Church, but since the vast majority were in the Central Jurisdiction the figure is probably not far off.

In any case, northerners were aware that the *sine qua non* of union was the segregation of Negro members. The defeat of the Plan of 1926, and the consistent position of the southerners on the issue since union was first discussed, made it quite clear to northerners that they had to make a choice between union and moral principle on race. They chose union.

In the period leading up to the Separation of 1844, The Methodist Episcopal Church accepted slavery as a civil and social institution not to be interferred with by the Church. This position was not finally changed until the time of the Civil War itself. In the Union of 1939, The Methodist Church accepted segregation within its structure at all of the basic levels of community life. In both cases, a moral compromise was made. In both cases, the Church faced a choice between institutional preservation or strength and maintenance of one of its own moral principles. In both cases, in the midst of complex relations and great pressures, the Church chose to sacrifice its principled stand on the rights of its Negro members in favor of the institution. In both cases, the compromise was a northern compromise. The issue of the Central Jurisdiction today and the possibilities of action by The Methodist Church in reducing segregation in the nation are both severely affected by what occurred in 1844 and 1939.

---

[50] Commission on Inter-Jurisdictional Relations, *Report and Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction*, 1964, p. 6. (Hereafter called Report of the Commission of 36)

[51] *op. cit.*, p. 9.

The Methodist Church has gone on record through General Conference pronouncements, statements by bishops, and publications by various agencies that it is an inclusive Church, that it holds segregation to be evil, and that it favors efforts to create equality in the Church and in society. The Church is attempting to face the racial crisis in the United States today as a moral issue. Its foundation for this position is its theological understanding of the relation of all men to God and the responsibility of Christians to work for the rights of all men as creatures of God. As we have seen, the Union of 1939 was only possible within a framework that included protection of regional autonomy and preservation of historic patterns of race relations in the South. The jurisdictional structure, including the Central Jurisdiction, and the Judicial Council provided the necessary safeguards. As in 1844, the place of Negroes in the Church played a central part in the outcome of relations between northern and southern Methodists. As in the period leading to Separation, the South took the initiative and determined the requirements for the existence of a national denominational body. The northern Church was required to compromise on a moral principle regarding race relations in order to secure the Union it sought. The Constitution ratified in 1939, built in part on the compromise of principle, serves as an effective barrier today to moral action on the part of the Church in the face of racial crisis.

The Uniting Conference was characterized by a mood of good feeling and accomplishment. There were a few dissenting voices, but, in the main, the tone was that of affection and agreement. Perhaps some of the difficulty faced now in acting upon the theological understanding of the evil of segregation is due to the fact that the theological problem was submerged in the Union. A quotation from the Episcopal Address to the Uniting Conference supports this interpretation. After commenting on the fraternal spirit of the deliberations leading toward union, the following statement is made about the issues that remain,

> This fraternal spirit may be expected to have full sway in this Uniting Conference. On the larger matters we are already in agreement. Since we have never been separated in faith, we will have no theological debates. Inasmuch as in the broader outlines of government we are as one, these can occasion no arguments. The tasks of harmonization lie with the minor, though important, realms -- realms made important because the whole scheme of union is meaningful. . . .[52]

---

[52] Lud H. Estes (ed.), Journal of the Uniting Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Methodist Protestant Church, 1939, (New York: Methodist Publishing House), p. 152.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DISPUTE OVER THE CENTRAL JURISDICTION

There has been ferment over the Central Jurisdiction in The Methodist Church ever since the Union in 1939. As in the past, the issue of regional autonomy and the issue of the place of Negroes in the Church have been intricately interwoven. Perhaps the most distinctive element in the period since Union has been the part played by the Negroes themselves. Previously, although the issue of what to do with the Negro members was central, the Negroes had little or nothing to say about what transpired. In the period leading to Separation, of course, the Negroes, as slaves, had no voice in the essential deliberations. Any possible protesters among the freedmen had likely removed themselves to the African Methodist Episcopal Church or the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. In the period leading to Union, the Negro Methodists did make their position known. Though Negro leaders attested to the loyalty of Negro Methodists to the Church at the time of Union, the rejection of The Plan of Union by seventeen out of nineteen annual conferences indicates the essential opposition to the disposition of Negro members in 1939. Although the General Conference has been the focus of discussion and action as the Church has moved toward elimination of the Central Jurisdiction, in a real sense the Negroes of the Central Jurisdiction have taken the lead in pressing the Church to a resolution of the internal segregation of Negroes. The distinctive feature about the current negotiations is that to a large extent the Negroes have replaced the abolitionists and northern liberals who spoke for them in the past. More and more, the white supporters of the Negro position have been following the lead of the Negroes.

This change did not occur suddenly. Rather, in a manner quite similar to the civil rights movements, Negroes assumed more and more leadership. The parallel goes deeper, of course, when we note the growing intensity of the demands of Negroes in the Church at the time when Negroes began to take the initiative in the desegregation struggle in the nation. Thus, in 1956, though deploring the segregation in the Church, spokesmen for the Central Jurisdiction were groping for solutions and advocating thorough study. In 1964, by contrast, after the Montgomery bus boycott, the sit-ins, and the widespread demonstrations, Negro leaders were challenging the position of the Church with very specific demands and elaborate proposals.

The Methodist Church encompasses the entire nation and has widespread membership overseas as well. The civil rights movement in the nation has greatly affected the internal Church controversy over the place of Negroes. The effect is seen in this chapter in the emergence of the Negro leadership in the Church. In the chapters on the annual conferences and bishops the affect is seen in changing patterns of action. As one would expect, participants have tended to reflect their geographical and racial identification. However, as we have contended all along, the Separation and Union have played central roles in determining how the Church would approach the problem and what it would do. A central problem has been presented by the legislative structure built into the Constitution. Beyond that, however, the treatment of the issue of the place of Negroes in 1844 and 1939 has had tremendous impact on the way in which the Church has approached the current problem. This will become more apparent as we detail what has occurred between the Union in 1939 and the present.

In the discussion of the Separation, we depended heavily on the Journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Donald Mathews' work on Methodism and Slavery demonstrates fully the additional material available in annual conference journals and the numerous periodicals of the Church. Nevertheless, the crucial decisions were made at the sessions of the General Conference. In the period leading to Union, the situation was somewhat different. The important meetings were those held by special commissions of the separated bodies as they moved toward Union, rather than the Journals of the respective churches. In the present discussion, there are two major sources of information representing the divided initiative and responsibility for the course of action taken since 1939. On the one hand, we have what takes place in, or under the authority of, the General Conference. Thus, we rely on General Conference Journals, The

Daily Christian Advocate, and special reports of Commissions appointed by the General Conference to study the jurisdictional system. On the other hand, paralleling the developments in the General Conference, we have the position of the Central Jurisdiction, represented in Jurisdictional Conference Journals and special reports of commissions it appointed.

It would be possible to look at the actions and position of the General Conference and Central Jurisdiction together. Certainly there has been continual interchange, prodding, and joint effort. The Central Jurisdiction participated fully in all of the deliberations of the General Conference and its special commissions. However, we may see more clearly the developing leadership position of the Negroes in this period if we inspect our materials separately. We can tie the material together when necessary.

The Emergence of the Problem

The compromise on the place of Negroes in The Methodist Church, which resulted in the Central Jurisdiction, smoothed the path toward Union. It did not, however, solve the problem of where Negroes were to fit into the life of the Church. The Church was called upon to declare itself on race soon after Union. The issue came to command an ever larger and larger role in succeeding General Conferences. A clear statement of the Church's commitment to the ultimate removal of all segregation and discrimination appears rather early in the period following the Union. The time lag between word and deed becomes our central focus of attention as we try to ascertain the forces at work as the Church moves toward inclusiveness.

The gravity of the problem of Negroes and their relation to others in the Church is represented by two actions of the General Conference of 1944. The war was not yet over, and, understandably, the major focus of attention was on its termination and the problems which would then confront the nation and the world. The war, however, had vastly changed the situation of Negroes in American society from what it had been just five years before at the time of Union. Negroes were fighting in the armed services and they were moving North to work in the defense industries. Segregation and discrimination were brought out into the open. The Episcopal Address recognized that race was a world problem, that some social programs were needed, but argued that regeneration of the human heart was the prime requisite for change.[1] Race was a world problem, but friction was developing in the Church. In consequence, the General Conference recommended that general meetings of the Church be held where "adequate and suitable" entertainment could be provided for all delegates.[2] This position was to be strengthened at later Conferences, but it represents a first move toward inclusiveness. In a more significant action, perhaps, the Church appointed a Commission on Relations of the Races in The Methodist Church with representatives from all jurisdictions.[3] The Commission reported to the General Conference of 1948. Though no direct action grew out of its study, and though no new study was commissioned until 1956 despite continual recommendation to the contrary, the appointment of the study commission in 1944 indicates the centrality of the problem even at that time.

---

[1] Lud H. Estes (ed.), Journal of the 1944 General Conference of The Methodist Church, (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House), p. 175.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 725.

The most significant statement made in 1948 appears in a report of the Committee on the State of the Church, entitled "The Christian Church and Race." We must recognize the status of a committee report. When the General Conference convenes, it appoints numerous committees to weigh important issues in different areas of concern and report the result of their deliberations to the Conference. Dozens of reports come before the Conference. Although delegates receive reports at least three months prior to the General Conference, important discussion in committee may not be reported and amendments may reflect the position of the committee only. On the day that the report cited was adopted by the Conference, twenty-four other reports from the Committee on the State of the Church were presented and acted upon. Furthermore, it was the final session of the Conference, when much must be accomplished and delegates are not in a mood to give careful consideration to committee reports that do not require immediate action or expenditure or legislative change. The committee reports present a position, but are not binding upon Methodists until the recommendations are voted into the Discipline as legislation. With the necessary qualifications in mind, however, we must take note of the reports adopted because they represent the thinking of concerned leaders and often become part of Church law at a later date. The position stated in the report called "The Christian Church and Race" in 1948 is important because of its timing and because it represents what is perhaps the strongest statement ever approved by the General Conference. The committee addressed itself to the principle and practice of discrimination.

---

[3] Ibid., p. 969.

> The principle of racial discrimination is in clear violation of the Christian belief in the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, and the Kingdom of God -- the proclamation of which, in word and life, is our Gospel. We therefore have no choice but to denote it as un-christian and to renounce it as evil. This we do without equivocation.
> The practice of racial discrimination can be no better, morally and spiritually speaking, than the principle from which it stems. It too is evil, being the prolific mother of injustice, dissension, and division in any society which practices it. Yet toleration of this practice, in some form or other, is as old as the Christian Church itself and is co-extensive with the history of the U. S. A. Consequently, thoughtful persons will know that it cannot be removed by a Resolution. Neither will it be removed without real determination by significant parts of the Church and the nation. Hence, we, as Christians, must address ourselves with patience and perseverance to the infinitely complicated task of removing racial discrimination, root and branch, from our common life, both in the Church and in the nation in which we live.[4]

---

[4] Lud H. Estes (ed.), Journal of the 1948 General Conference of The Methodist Church, (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House,) p. 739.

The report was adopted after one attempt to amend it was defeated. In that attempt, a delegate from Georgia tried to include the proviso that separation of the races was not necessarily discrimination. He also tried to remove the central thrust of several recommendations designed to move Church agencies, institutions, and local churches toward desegregation. His amendment failed, but he won a limited victory in that years passed before some of the committee recommendations were put into practice. Others are still being debated. Thus the report called for a continuing study commission, which was apparently approved by the General Conference in their adoption of the report. It was eight years before a study commission was appointed. The report also called upon institutions of the Church to restudy any policy which proceeds on the basis of discrimination. It is notable that in 1964, the General Conference rejected a plan that would have required either integration of institutions or loss of Church funds and called for another study of policies and practice.

This incident is instructive to us in our understanding of the Methodists and race. Throughout its history, as we have seen, the existence of a national Methodist body has depended upon placating sectional concerns on race. In the contemporary period the necessity to listen closely to minority interests has contributed greatly to the disparity between the officially stated position and the actions of the Church. Strong action on the part of the Church has been limited by the Constitution, no matter what the desire. It has also been limited by the ever-present fear of a new breach occuring over the issue of race. That this is not overstated is evident from the Episcopal Address in 1960, which said,

> . . . Either we go forward together as equals to implement our mutual respect and true community or we move apart, in strife, to stultify our Christian profession. This latter alternative is a very real one, as we must know. In a church like ours, it is unthinkable and therefore not a rational choice at all.[5] (emphasis added)

In 1952, we have the first important statement on race by the bishops. The Episcopal Address, which in essence is a state of the Church address, comments first on the great progress made by Negroes since emancipation. After observing that barriers are lessening in America, the bishops say,

> To discriminate against a person solely upon the basis of his race is both unfair and unchristian. Every child of God is entitled to that place in society which he has won by his industry, his integrity, and his character. To deny him that position of honor because of the accident of his birth is neither honest democracy nor good religion. . . .[6]

This statement has often been cited as evidence of the basic Methodist position on race, and, in recent years, as evidence of a position long held. Although the Episcopal Address does not specify any action to take, it represents at least an official understanding of the relation of each man to God. The emphasis on the individual, which necessarily calls into question segregation on a racial basis, is qualified by the sentence that completes the above quotation. The bishops go on to say, "Any race that can produce a Marian Anderson in art, a Ralph Bunche in diplomacy, a George Washington Carver in science, a Jackie Robinson in sport, and a Mary Bethune in education, may well be proud of its racial achievements and dignity."[7] The whole point of the theological and sociological critique of segregation, of course, is that it deals with men only as group members and stifles individuation. George Kelsey puts this clearly in Racism and the Christian Understanding of Man.[8] A person who is a member of an out-race is part of a "homogenized mass." If we are able to ascribe racial achievements and dignity to the Negro, then we may also ascribe high crime rates, high unemployment rates, low income, etc. to the race. When we do this, none escapes the stigma. Undoubtedly the bishops meant what they said about every child of God and were not aware that their attempt to praise fit the pattern of racist thought. Kelsey supports Sartre's understanding, given in his discussion of anti-semitism, that even the democrat coming to the defense of the out-race treats the race as an abstraction.

---

[5] S. Leon T. Moore (ed.), Journal of the 1960 General Conference of The Methodist Church, (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House), p. 206.

[6] Lud H. Estes (ed.), Journal of the 1952 General Conference of The Methodist Church, (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House), p. 167.

The treatment of Negroes in The Methodist Church as a group has entered into almost all of the deliberations over the Central Juris-distion. Proponents of integration and Negroes themselves have introduced this kind of thinking into discussion, which has confused the problem of finding a solution. This homogenization has entered into discussion about the future of Negro representation on Church boards and agencies. The Central Jurisdiction had about 3.7 per cent of the membership in the Church in 1964, but under the Plan of Union was entitled to one-sixth of the representation on boards and agencies. The argument put forth throughout the long debate over the Central Jurisdiction that some guarantee or protection needs to be given to Negroes when the Central Jurisdiction dissolves perpetuates the treatment of Negroes as a group when the basic fight is for acceptance as individuals. Although the arguments for the protection of Negro representation has had a practical purpose, it comes dangerously close to the oft-stated position that "they" would be happier in their own churches or "they" will lose a great deal by the dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction.[9]

---

[7] Ibid., p. 167-8.

[8] (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965), see Chapter III, pp. 60-79.

---

[9] The problem of how to dissolve the Central Jurisdiction while protecting the rights of Negro representation has entered into some of the Central Jurisdiction studies and into the reports of the Commission of 70 and Commission of 36. A good example of the attempt to end segregation but protect Negro group interests, which illustrates the confusion of individuation and group thinking, appears in a debate at the General Conference of 1964 over the protection of minority rights. Thurman Dodson, a delegate from the Washington Conference, part of the Central Jurisdiction, said, in part, "... I think it is necessary to have some protection for minority rights.... The only representatives of the general church boards of our (race) come today from the Central Jurisdiction. These so-called integrated conferences have for a long time sent delegates to this Conference and Jurisdictional Conferences, but never have they yet put a single person (Negro) on one of the general boards of the church. These are matters of history and while it may not be good politics, perhaps, to keep it forever, certainly there must be, in these critical days, some protection for minority interests of people who represent only 3.5 per cent of the general church census, so I say that while we might not like special legislation, I think

The General Conference of 1952 did not take any action that moved it closer to inclusiveness. Several recommendations were made by the Committee on the State of the Church in its report on The Methodist Church and Race. Although their recommendations on employment and extension of service without racial discrimination, adopted by the Church along with the report, proved to be idle words, two recommendations became Church policy in 1956. The Committee recommended that legislation be passed to enable churches of the Central Jurisdiction to transfer into the regional jurisdiction in which they are located. They also recommended that a commission be set up to study the practices of the Church to the end that racial discrimination would ultimately be eliminated from the Church.[10] In 1956 legislation was passed as suggested and a commission was appointed, although its task was more restricted than the committee would have desired.

We have already commented on the limited significance of a committee report as an expression of Church policy. Nevertheless, as we move toward explication and analysis of the way in which the

---

it is necessary in the special climate that we find in the so-called liberal parts of our church." Daily Christian Advocate, Proceedings of the General Conference of 1964, (Pittsburgh: The Methodist Publishing House), VII, No. 6, p. 236. Opponents of integration in the Church have been accused of using similar arguments for perpetuation of the Central Jurisdiction as a cover for racist sentiments. In some cases, the charge was undoubtedly accurate. As indicated, however, defenders of Negroes, and Negroes, have put forth similar arguments for group protection. Full integration in the Church and protection of minority rights cannot both be obtained.

[10] Journal, 1952, op. cit., p. 1419.

Church deals with the Central Jurisdiction after 1956, it may be well to note two passages from the report adopted by the General Conference.

> In our world, our nation and our Church however, racial discrimination and segregation do exist. As sincere followers of our Lord it is our business to help free our world and our nation from these evils. But it is more immediately our imperative duty to confess our failure to achieve God's will in Methodism and then resolutely to set about achieving a Christian brotherhood in the Church that will be free from racial discrimination and segregation.[11]

> The problem facing Methodism in the matter of race is perhaps the most crucial problem before our world today. Therefore, it presents to us a God-given opportunity. In keeping, therefore, with the thrilling challenge set forth in the Episcopal Address we propose that the Church seek to free itself utterly from racial discrimination and segregation. . . . .[12]

The statement recognizes that race is the most crucial problem facing the world and the Church, and calls for a confession of failure followed by an all out effort to free the church of segregation and discrimination. We will be examining the manner in which and the extent to which the Church has carried out the task.

With the exception of the study commission of 1944, the Church had taken no action on segregation and discrimination in the Church in the period from 1939 to 1956. In 1956, two years after the landmark school decision of the Supreme Court, the General Conference took two actions that focused the attention of the Church on the Central Jurisdiction. The procedure for dealing with internal segregation adopted at that time has determined the course of action of the Church on this issue since that time.

---

[11] Ibid., p. 1417-1418. [12] Ibid., p. 1418.

The Initial Response to the Problem; Amendment IX and The Commission of 70

The Conference began with a strong statement by the bishops. They incorporated the recommendations of the report on The Methodist Church and Race of 1952 that called for a procedure for transfer from the Central Jurisdiction and a study commission into the Episcopal Address. They also quoted the passage cited earlier from the Episcopal Address of 1952 which called discrimination on the basis of race unchristian. The statement of 1952 and its repetition in 1956 with a specific call for action have been cited often as the official position of The Methodist Church on race. Included with the call for action was a rather realistic statement of how the Church must proceed. In the light of what has happened since 1956, it may be accurate to say that the bishops well understood the problems the Church faced as it confronted race relations within the Church. Their understanding of the difficulties involved in squaring principle with practice is seen in the following passage.

> The adjustment of race relations toward a more Christian brotherhood is an overshadowing concern of American Church life. The desire for better race relations is prevalent. The principle is no longer debatable. The sole question centers in a procedure which will preserve the good while eliminating the bad. No man at present is wise enough to chart the course the Church should

> take with completeness and precision. There are no perfect answers and no 'either-or' alternatives; no iron-clad attitudes and no cure-all prescriptions to which we can turn for a quick solution of the problem. We are humbled before the command of our Lord in the consciousness that we have all sinned and come short of His expectation and that the devils of inequality and discrimination have resisted His children's efforts to exorcise them. Our hope for success is to unite in a common endeavor, bound together by a common purpose and conviction, motivated by a Christian spirit and to move in sure but calculated steps to the attainment of our vision of a Christian society. Let us make this our conscious endeavor and let us bring to its support a will to succeed.
>
> In the spirit of our Methodist Fathers, who sought to establish principles by a practical consideration of what could be done, we can find the way to the realization of a true Christian brotherhood. Both those who lead and those who follow must understand the steps which, if taken one by one, bring us nearer the goal. . . .
>
> During the coming quadrennium the Church can make significant progress in the improvement of these relationships with benefit to all, provided it has a plan and seeks to live by its provisions.[13]

The Church did establish a plan. Our appraisal of it and the extent to which the Church has sought to live by its procedures will come later. In the two actions taken, the General Conference appears to have heeded the suggestion of the bishops that a procedure be found that preserved the good while eliminating the bad within the framework of the practical consideration of what could be done. In the first action, the General Conference adopted a report of the Committee on Conferences proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Church which would provide for the transfer of churches or annual conferences from one jurisdiction to another.[14] The amendment, which was sent to the annual conferences for approval and subsequently passed, is referred to in all succeeding Journals and other literature as Amendment IX, the term which we shall use.

---

[13] Lud H. Estes (ed.), Journal of the 1956 General Conference of The Methodist Church, (Nashville: The Methodist Church), pp. 221-222.

Amendment IX provides for the transfer of churches and/or annual conferences to another annual conference or jurisdiction. As written, it provides the possibility of transfer in or out of the Central Jurisdiction. In basic intent, and in subsequent practice, it is the only procedure available for the ultimate dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction. Its operation is quite simple. Two-thirds of the members of the unit wishing to transfer must approve the transfer, and two-thirds of the conference receiving or releasing a church, or jurisdiction receiving or releasing a conference, must approve the transfer as well. The amendment concludes with the statement that the Central Jurisdiction will have been abolished when all of its conferences have been transferred "in accordance with the voluntary procedure."[15]

The requirement of the two-thirds vote and the mention of the voluntary procedure are crucial to our understanding of how far the Church was prepared to go in 1956. The debates surrounding the presentation of the amendment to the General Conference are instructive.

---

[14] Ibid. See pp. 1403-1406 for the Committee Report and the Amendment. See pp. 457-469 and pp. 471-480 for the debate on the Amendment.

[15] Ibid., p. 1405.

There were three major arguments. The prevailing voice was that of the proponents of the Report containing the amendment. Emphasis was put on the voluntary procedure, with support given to it on the basis that it neither forced segregation nor integration and on the basis that it was all that was possible in the South.[16] A second position was presented by members of the Central Jurisdiction. They recognized the limited nature of the step being taken, but they considered it a gain in the existing situation. They were willing to support the amendment, however, on the basis that it represented a step forward, even though hesitant.[17] A third view was that of complete opposition on the basis that the amendment did not go far enough and was in reality a method of delaying any real action toward desegregation in the Church for at least another four years. This argument took several forms, but was put most persuasively by Miss Thelma Stevens of the Woman's Division of Christian Service. She argued forcefully that adoption of Amendment IX would simply be a delaying tactic.[18] Her argument is important on two grounds. First, the Woman's Division is recognized in the Church as a leader in social action. It had, in fact, integrated its meetings and staff ten or twelve years prior to 1956, and the Woman's Division had been calling upon the Church to take strong action. Second, the position that she stated in 1956 gained numerous adherents in 1960 and 1964.

---

[16] Ibid., pp. 462-464.

[17] Ibid., pp. 471-472.

[18] Ibid., pp. 468-469.

Miss Stevens and a spokesman from the Central Jurisdiction also recognized that the piecemeal dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction under Amendment IX would result in a weakened Central Jurisdiction existing for a long period of time. This argument became one of the chief bases of opposition of Central Jurisdiction leaders to the Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction submitted to the General Conference of 1964. Prophetic as the opposition voices may have been, the General Conference adopted Amendment IX with only two dissenting votes.[19]

Immediately after the adoption of Amendment IX, the General Conference proceeded to approve the appointment of a Commission to Study and Recommend Action Concerning the Jurisdictional System. The Commission of 70, as it came to be called, was assigned specific responsibilities and authority, among which were the distribution of information during the quadrennium and the presentation of a report to the General Conference of 1960. The first three responsibilities assigned to it are extremely important to us. They read,

> 1. To make a thorough study of our Jurisdictional System, with special reference to its philosophy, its effectiveness, its weaknesses and its relationship to the future of The Methodist Church.
>
> 2. To carry on studies and conduct hearings in all the Jurisdictions on racial segregation in The Methodist Church and all other problems related to the Jurisdictional System.
>
> 3. To develop courses of action directed toward greater interracial brotherhood and the spirit of Christian love.[20]

---

[19] Ibid., p. 480.

[20] Ibid., p. 1408.

In these three recommendations, which constitute the central task of the Commission of 70 and define its area of study, we see the relation of the period since Union to the two earlier periods we have studied. Once again, the problem of the autonomy of the regional minority over against the General Conference is linked closely to the problem of the place of Negroes in the Church. The Report of the Commission of 70 to the General Conference of 1960 reviews at length the history and philosophy of the jurisdictional system. In the review, it summarizes the arguments for and against the regional jurisdictional system and emphasizes that the question of the place of Negroes enters into both the attack and defense of the system.[21] It is quite clear that the inheritance from the great compromises in the past have affected present deliberations through structural limitations in the Constitution and in shaping the basic approach of the Church to the contemporary problem. This judgment may be supported by mentioning once again the fear of disunity stated by the bishops in 1960. It may also be supported by reference to a statement in the Report of the Commission of 70, in which the problem of sectionalism is cited. The statement concludes with the basic principle of the jurisdictional system.

> In dealing with organization, candor requires us to admit that the sectional differences and antagonisms that have hampered national unity have not been avoided in Methodism. The Church

---

[21] The Commission to Study and Recommend Action Concerning the Jurisdictional System, Report to the 1960 General Conference of The Methodist Church, Jan. 6, 1960, pp. 5-8. (Hereafter called Report of the Commission of 70.)

> has been confronted with the same basic dilemma facing the nation: how may unity and harmony be achieved in the presence of intense sectional differences and tensions? Methodists have discovered, just as the nation has discovered, that in the long run the forces holding our Church together have been stronger than the forces of division and disunity. It has been necessary, however, to approach the differences in a spirit of compromise to promote unity. Hence, if any single philosophical principle may be admitted by all as undergirding the jurisdictional system, it is that compromise may be an instrument to serve the highest ethical values.
>
> Beyond the principle of compromise, it is difficult if not impossible to find common philosophical ground for understanding the jurisdictional system. . . (emphasis added.)[22]

We would certainly agree that compromise is at the heart of the jurisdictional system. That compromise is a necessary instrument to serve the highest ethical values may be accepted as well. Although the necessity of compromise must be recognized, we may well ask if the Church, as the body of Christ, can operate on the principle of compromise. This appears to contradict the very nature of the Gospel. Furthermore, a question arises whether too much has been given up in any particular compromise so that some value other than the highest ethical value is being served. In our case, the persistent question throughout the entire history centers on the relative weight and real danger of disunity over against the price paid in terms of the place of Negroes in the Church.

In any event, the actions taken by the General Conference of 1956 are of tremendous importance in that they have shaped the course of action of The Methodist Church on this issue since that time. We proceed to analyze what has occurred within the mold fashioned then.

---

[22] Ibid., p. 6.

The 1960 Episcopal Address drew attention of the delegates to the pending debate over the Report of the Commission of 70 and stressed the central importance of the deliberations about to take place. They reiterated the strong statements of the bishops in 1952 and 1956, and then said about this Conference, "Our problem is not a new pronouncement but to bring our actions into line with our professions. . . ."[23] They called upon the delegates for understanding and warned of the danger of disunity. The time for action had come. Our task is to examine the action taken and to determine how closely actions were indeed brought in line with professions. The importance of the issues raised in the Report of the Commission of 70 is attested to by the fact that the General Conference debated the Report on at least six of the twelve days that the Conference was in session.

During the quadrennium following the appointment of the Commission, tremendous effort was put into the analysis of the jurisdictional system. After initial planning sessions, the Commission divided into teams and undertook to collect testimony at meetings held at major cities in each of the Jurisdictions. In addition, Frederick Shippey was appointed Director of Research and assigned the task of doing systematic study on a number of major questions dealing with the jurisdictional structure. The information provided from the jurisdictional hearings and the studies submitted to the Commission by Shippey were used by the Commission to formulate a major report containing several major policy recommendations and numerous specific suggestions affecting all organizational levels and structures of the Church. The Report was put in the hands of all delegates prior to the General Conference, and considerable debate preceded the opening of the Conference. The Commission was allotted a budget of $250, 000 to carry out its appointed task, although total expenditures were about $200, 000.

---

[23] Journal, 1960, op. cit., p. 205.

The type of considerations that helped shape the recommendations of the Commission is revealed in the studies submitted by Shippey. The studies were designed to provide a broad range of information on the jurisdictional system. Specific reports dealt with a comparison of each jurisdiction's capital expenditure and debt on church buildings and status of ministers since unification; comparative giving and membership; a thorough review of integration to date; a comparison of pension and salary scales, which present a major hurdle; and a case study of four of the six churches transferred under Amendment IX since it was passed in 1958.[24] Taken together, the reports provided a large mass of material from which the Commission could make judgments about the effectiveness of the jurisdictional system, and, more important for our study, could isolate some of the practical problems involved in the integration of the Central Jurisdiction into regional jurisdictions. Shippey's studies were research documents designed to provide information. He was not responsible for the policy adopted by the Commission, nor for the use of the materials he provided.

---

[24] Frederick A. Shippey, Selected Work Documents, Prepared for The Commission For Study and Action on the Jurisdictional System, (The Methodist Church, Copyright 1960, Frederick A. Shippey).

The Commission of 70 reported its findings to the General Conference. The Conference was, of course, free to reject it or change it in any way. However, the Report represented the labors of Church leaders from all jurisdictions representing almost all of the major opposing views on the jurisdictional structure and the place of Negroes in The Methodist Church. The Report was presented with carefully elaborated supporting arguments for its findings and recommendations. A strong case for the position taken in the Report was included in the Report itself, which had been in the hands of delegates for three months prior to the opening of the Conference. Furthermore, the annual conferences had approved Amendment IX which the Report unreservedly supported. Some changes were made after debate on the floor of the General Conference, but in essence the position adopted by the Commission of 70 became the official position of The Methodist Church. The major arguments for the position taken by the Commission, presented in the Report and in debate, apparently reflect the thinking of the majority of elected representatives of the Church at the General Conference. We shall first examine the major arguments and recommendations and then turn to the major alternative and opposition views presented.

The thinking of the spokesmen of the Commission, supported by the Conference, may be grouped under five headings. (1) The first major agreement of the Commission concerned voluntarism. Perhaps the most important aspect of the procedure adopted by the Church is that it is based on voluntary assent by those to be affected to any change. Charles C. Parlin, chairman of the Commission of 70, stated to the Conference, "The genius of this report, if there is one back of it, is that everything is voluntary."[25] During the debate, Parlin was asked about the use of the verb "should" in recommending eight procedures that would bring about inclusiveness in the Church. The question and his response are seen in the following quotation.

> ... When the debate ended on Saturday, a Delegate asked the question, "Did your Commission differentiate between the verb 'shall' and the verb 'should,' and was the verb 'should,' which is a weak verb rather than the strong verb used advisedly?"
>
> Our commission did consider the difference between the strong verb 'shall' and the weaker verb 'should.' We used the word 'should' advisedly. Let me state as clearly and succinctly as I can. The recommendation on Page 21 is not a Disciplinary action, but a recommendation; a statement of a goal. It is not a command. It is not mandatory. It is not an order.
>
> This was debated thoroughly in the Commission and when the Commission understood that recommendation on Page 21 was a statement of recommendation, a statement of goal; that it was not a command, an order, a mandatory provision in our Commission of Seventy, we had no trouble with it. I hope that this Body also will find no trouble with this understanding.[26]

Voluntarism is recognized by all to be at the heart of the procedure adopted by The Methodist Church to resolve its internal race problem. Proponents of the voluntary method support it on the basis that it is the only means by which any change could be brought about without causing disunity. Further, they argue that change takes time and the voluntary procedure allows that which is possible at any given moment to be done. Opponents of the voluntary procedure attack it as a means of avoiding any meaningful change. At least three questions need to be raised. First, have leaders in the Church used the voluntary procedure as effectively as possible so as to negate the charge of avoidance and delay? Second, is the episcopal structure of Methodism identical in fact to congregationally oriented denominations when it comes to action on crucial issues? Third, is the action of the Church on an ethical issue, or the moral position of the Church on an issue, determined solely by vote? Church law is, of course, determined by vote, but The Methodist Church is much less permissive in the case of those affected when the issue is ministerial smoking than it is on inclusiveness of races in local congregations or annual conferences.

---

[25] Journal, 1960, op. cit., p. 275. [26] Ibid., p. 478.

(2) The second major argument put forth was that Amendment IX, proposed in 1956 and ratified in 1958, ought to be given a chance. Harold A. Bosley, speaking in support of this position at the Conference, said that the Church had accepted two things. "The first objective is the abolition of the Central Jurisdiction; and the second, a due Constitutional process by which this can be done. This must be given a fair trial. . . ."[27] This view prevailed. The Commission of 70 strongly supported this view in arguing for one of its central, and most controversial, recommendations. In the light of their study they recommended, "That the

---

[27] Ibid., p. 353.

General Conference of 1960 undertake no basic change in the Central Jurisdiction. . . ." They strongly urged that the Church take cognizance of Amendment IX and the possibilities available there.[28] It is instructive to recall an exchange that took place in the debate over Amendment IX in 1956. Georgia Harkness, a delegate to the General Conference, and a scholar in the field of Christian Ethics, asked prior to the vote if Amendment IX would become the permanent mode of eliminating the Central Jurisdiction if adopted. The response for the Committee by Leonard Slutz, later made a member of the Commission of 70, took this form,

> Mr. Chairman, nothing this General Conference can do can be permanent and forever. Every Amendment to our Constitution or law can be re-examined at the next session of The General Conference.
>
> We have recommended the appointment of a Study Commission which we anticipate will come in with many recommendations for further steps, but this in our honest judgment is the fastest and longest step we can take now.[29]

Amendment IX has had the consistent support of the Commissions appointed by the Church to study the jurisdictional structure and the Central Jurisdiction problem. There have been strong voices raised against this procedure, but the position of an official commission carries tremendous weight and has a great advantage when it comes to voting. It obviously is much easier to adopt any particular procedure than it is to terminate it. In 1956, Miss Thelma Stevens warned of the danger of adopting

---

[28] Report of the Commission of 70, op. cit., p. 12

[29] Journal, 1956, op. cit., pp. 479-480.

Amendment IX without adequate study. She argued then that it would "emasculate" the Central Jurisdiction by leaving the large portion of that jurisdiction lying within the bounds of the Southeastern Jurisdiction without effective leadership for a long period of time.[30] This argument has been one of the chief bases for the objection of the Committee of Five of the Central Jurisdiction to the Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction adopted in 1964. That plan, submitted by the Commission of 36 appointed in 1960, is based on a two-step procedure which allows for inclusion of Negro conferences in regional jurisdictions while still separated from the existing conferences. They argue that segregation is still maintained and are now opposing the two-step procedure.

(3) A third major argument for the procedure adopted, and against immediate dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction, centers on the potential loss of representation and voice of Negroes in the affairs of the Church. In the presentation of the Report of the Commission of 70 to the General Conference, Charles Parlin spoke about the problems involved in dissolving the Central Jurisdiction.

> Nobody has proposed or even considered the possibility of disintegrating the Central Jurisdiction on that basis (simple assignment to regional jurisdictions according to residence). The Negro representatives of the Central Jurisdiction itself are determined that they would like, when they come -- they all want to eventually come -- they all want to see the eventual abolition of the Central Jurisdiction, but then when they come they want to retain some form of voice in the highest runnings of the Church.

---

[30] Ibid., p. 468.

> Now, what happens if this complete disintegration by geography takes place in the Northeast Jurisdiction? You would then have 4. 3 per cent, Negroes. In the Southeast you would have 6. 5 Negroes. In the North Central you would have 2 per cent Negroes; and in the South Central you would have 2. 5 per cent Negro. You see, in every case there would be a very small, hopeless minority." (He pointed out earlier that the number of Central Jurisdiction members in Western Jurisdiction is so small that it rounds off to zero per cent.)[31]

The Report approaches the question of loss of leadership by raising a fundamental fact that should be kept in mind. They point out that the conviction is growing in the Church that segregation is morally wrong. They agree with the judgment, but disagree with the analysis that sees the Central Jurisdiction as the major cause or location of racial segregation in the Church. They argue against the view that the Central Jurisdiction has actually been responsible for the integration that does exist in The Methodist Church.

> Unfortunately and erroneously, the jurisdictional system as a whole, mainly because of the Central Jurisdiction, has become for some a symbol of segregation. Much of the opposition to the system as a whole results from this error.
>
> Actually, the Central Jurisdiction assures racial integration in the highest echelons of our Church -- in the Council of Bishops, the Judicial Council and in all boards, commissions and committees of the Church. There is no other denomination in America where this degree of racial integration in the governing bodies of the Church has been achieved.[32]

This kind of thinking is opposed by proponents of the immediate dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction. They see this as veiled racism used to protect the existing pattern of separation. The Commission shrewdly quotes from the stated view of leaders of the Central Jurisdiction, who agree that the Central Jurisdiction is not the basic cause of the segregation in the Church, to support its view. They quote from the 1956 Report to the Central Jurisdiction by its Commission to Study the Jurisdictional System.

---

[31] *Journal*, 1960, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

[32] *Report* of the Commission of 70, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

> The major and central problem concerning Negroes in The Methodist Church is segregation. This problem is not inherent in the Central Jurisdiction, but in the purposes, the minds, attitudes, traditions and customs which have given birth to separation and segregation on the lower structural levels of the church and the larger community in which the church exists. The jurisdictional system is not inherently evil, and the removal of segregation does not follow inevitably with the abolition of the jurisdictional system, not even with the abolition of the Central Jurisdiction. There can and most likely will be segregation with or without the Central Jurisdiction until some other conditions are met.[33]

It is essential that we see from the foregoing that the opponents of segregation in the Church are divided both in their understanding of the cause of segregation and the way in which to resolve the problem. This is one of the most difficult aspects of the whole problem which only tends to complicate the already complex relation of the jurisdictional structure and segregation of Negroes. The argument put forth by the Commission Report and by Parlin at the General Conference catches opponents of the Commission position at their weakest point. The problem of how to maintain integration at the highest levels of the Church at the same time that integration is achieved at the local and conference levels is perhaps the most serious barrier to agreement on the part of those committed to change. This problem has caused some conflict between the Commission appointed by the General Conference and the Committee of Five. The conflict has also appeared in debates at General Conference between persons opposed to segregation who support different cures.

---

[33] Commission to Study the Jurisdictional System, 1956 Report to the Central Jurisdiction, as in Report of the Commission of 70, p. 10.

(4) The fourth argument put forth by the Commission is really a variation of the third, or a refinement of the position. It is separated here to stress the conclusion to which the Commission comes. After arguing that the Central Jurisdiction is not the cause of the segregation in the Church and, in fact, contributes to high level participation of Negroes, the Commission rejects abolition of the Central Jurisdiction at this time. Their position in essence is that there are a number of problems that must be solved before the Central Jurisdiction can be abolished by any means other than the voluntary procedure.[34] This particular position has been the subject of considerable debate. Nearly everyone concerned agrees that abolition of the Central Jurisdiction will not solve all problems. There is, however, great disparity of opinion about how to proceed. The Commission's view is based on the understanding that the problems surrounding dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction must precede abolition. Opponents of the Commission's position argue that the Church ought to rid itself of the segregating

---

[34] Ibid., p. 10.

structures and then pick up the pieces as they fall. At the heart of the opposition position is view that the voluntary procedure under Amendment IX allows a great deal of foot-dragging. The bishops had argued for a step by step plan that would move the Church closer to its goal of inclusiveness. That approach is not under question. Rather, the question is, "Which step, and how long will that step be?" The Commission of 70 has declared that the only principle operative in the jurisdictional system is that of compromise. Compromise is recognized as legitimate and necessary. In each period of our study, however, there is a question as to whether the compromise represents a true balance of competing power positions. In the framework of The Methodist Church and race, compromise has led to institutional unity at the price of a strong position on, or involvement of, Negroes. Opponents of the Commission position have argued that the price is too high for a Church that espouses the Christian Gospel. As we have seen, the Commission has wisely pointed out that segregation in the Church did not begin with the Plan of Union.

(5) The final grouping of the thinking of the Commission concerns recommendations for specific actions and changes in the life of the Church rather than arguments. Basic to all recommendations put forth by the Commission were the two primary recommendations that there be no basic change in the jurisdictional structure[35] and that

---

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

there be no basic change in the Central Jurisdiction.[36] The latter recommendation was subject to severe criticism. It had been picked up by the papers, which interpreted it to mean that the Church was committed to the maintenance of segregation. In the debates at the General Conference, proponents of abolition of the Central Jurisdiction attacked the no change position as a failure of the Church to live up to its principles. At the same time, proponents of the utilization of the voluntary procedure under Amendment IX argued that the very adoption of that Amendment was clear evidence that the Church was committed to change.

After debate, an amendment to the Commission report was adopted as a substitute for the Commission recommendation that there be no basic change in the Central Jurisdiction. The amendment did not in any way change the recommended procedure for change. On the contrary, it demonstrates clearly the commitment of the General Conference to voluntarism under Amendment IX. It is interesting to note that in the debate, Charles Parlin, chairman of the Commission of 70, opposed the change in the language on the grounds that the statement as submitted was an accurate appraisal of the effect of Amendment IX on the jurisdictional structure in terms of the Central Jurisdiction. He said,

> ...If I analyze this debate so far, we are not talking in substance at all; we are fighting for newspaper headlines.
>
> As I understand this motion before us, it would make no

---

[36] Ibid., p. 12.

> change in the basic recommendation that the Commission turns in. It is a question of phraseology and how the newspapers will pick it up. This was the subject of a great deal of debate and discussion in our Commission -- how do you say things? In the end we came to the conclusion, that is the overwhelming majority, that we should state the position of the recommendation accurately and succinctly without any attempt to evade what the proposition was.[37]

The Amendment prevailed, and the Conference went on record in support of Amendment IX as a basic change. The Conference accepted the reasoning of the Commission for the continuation of Amendment IX as the method to achieve inclusiveness, but substituted the following affirmation of that method in place of the recommendation for no change.

> Since the General Conference of 1956 undertook a basic change in our Church relative to the Central Jurisdiction and since that basic change was approved by the Annual Conferences of the Church by Amendment No. 9, which permits and encourages the extinction of the Central Jurisdiction, we now urge (implementation under Amendment IX.)[38]

In support of the goal of inclusiveness, the Commission made recommendations in three distinct areas to move the Church closer to its stated goal. They first proposed recommendations to overcome the disparity between the principle of inclusiveness and practice. They supported their earlier statement that the jurisdictional system promotes integration at the highest levels in the Church, but went on to make a very forceful statement about the disparity between the highest echelons and life throughout the Church.

---

[37] Journal, 1960, op. cit., p. 319.

[38] Ibid., p. 319.

> Unfortunately this integration in the higher echelons does not permeate the whole of the Church. Integration is not the rule practiced in all Methodist Churches and Institutions. Actually segregation is the accepted and approved practice in some churches and Conferences and Institutions throughout the nation.[39]

They proceeded to isolate a crucial problem in bringing Church practice into line with Church principle when they said, "Our Boards and Agencies have taken positive positions in favor of integration, yet the institutions which they supervise do not always observe these positions."[40]

To overcome the descrepancy between principle and practice, the Commission proposed eight procedures to help achieve an inclusive Church.[41] The procedures included suggestions for local churches, Church boards, bishops, and ministers. We do not need to list them here, but we should note that the Commission saw an integral relation between the Central Jurisdiction issue and what was happening in terms of race in the rest of the life of the Church. This will be a central contention in our discussion of Church structure and race in our Part II of this study. The basic thrust of the Commission proposals was for increased contact of members of different races at all levels of the Church. As noted previously, mandatory measures were firmly rejected. Several speakers from the South indicated the necessity of avoiding all sign of coercion or force, and they were reassured by rejection of several attempts to put teeth in the recommendations.[42]

---

[39] Report of the Commission of 70, op. cit., pp. 20-21.

[40] Ibid., p. 21. [41] Ibid., pp. 21-22.

[42] Journal, 1960, op. cit., pp. 477-489.

A second major area of concern was the implementation of the recommendations made. The integral relation of the problems of regionalism and the place of Negroes in the Church as the crucial issue facing the Church in this whole matter was explicitly stated again.

> That The Methodist Church is seriously seeking a practical and fair method of doing away with forced segregation is apparent in the appointment of this Commission. How this can be accomplished without (1) disrupting Union, and (2) doing an injustice to our Negro Methodists is our problem.[43]

The answer posited by the Commission expressly disavows legislation as a possible method. Rather, they propose a number of programs of study and education and action throughout the Church structure. Central to the Commission's proposals on implementation is the suggestion that the Board of Social and Economic Relations (now part of the Board of Christian Social Concerns) have primary responsibility to study the existing situation and make recommendations to the next General Conference on ways to improve race relations.[44]

It was at this point that the General Conference made the most significant change in the Commission proposals. Instead of delegating responsibility to the Board of Social and Economic Relations as the Commission proposed, the General Conference voted to establish another quadrennial commission. The Commission of 36 thus came into being.

---

[43] Report of the Commission of 70, op. cit., p. 22.

[44] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

The distinction between the Commission of 36 and its predecessor, the Commission of 70, is seen in the opening paragraph of the recommendation establishing the Commission.

> The continuing program of The Methodist Church to (1) abolish the Central Jurisdiction, (2) promote interracial brotherhood through Christian love, and (3) achieve a more inclusive Church shall be entrusted to a quadrennial Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations.[45]

Whereas the Commission of 70 had been delegated the task of studying the jurisdictional system as a whole, the Commission of 36 was appointed to undertake a study and make recommendations pertaining to the Central Jurisdiction issue alone. A number of specific proposals followed, almost all of them having to do with the study of special problems in the utilization of Amendment IX. In any event, primary responsibility for progress of the Church toward inclusiveness was delegated to the Commission of 36.

The third area of recommendations by the Commission involved changes in the Constitution concerning General Conference delegates, the meeting time of jurisdictional conferences, and the episcopacy, which were designed to improve the jurisdictional system and promote exchange of views through a change in episcopal assignment procedure.[46] The Commission proposed the changes on the basis that they would tend to reduce regionalism and create a better basis of understanding throughout the Church. It was hoped that the improved understanding would facilitate change under Amendment IX. The amendments, slightly restructured in debate in the Conference, were adopted by the General Conference. They failed to pass in the annual conferences, however and in somewhat changed form are again before the annual conferences as a result of the action of the General Conference of 1964.

---

[45] Journal, 1960, op. cit., p. 1696.

[46] Report of the Commission of 70, op. cit., pp. 24-30.

The Commission report, as amended, was adopted by the General Conference and represents the Methodist approach to the internal race problem in 1960. Approval by the General Conference alone would carry tremendous weight. The fact that the annual conferences had approved Amendment IX which is so central to the Report of the Commission is conclusive evidence that The Methodist Church supported the thinking of the Commission of 70 at that time.

Arguments were raised and alternatives to the Commission proposals were posed in the debates at the General Conference. The major alternatives are seen in several amendments proposed from the floor of the Conference. One amendment, which failed, called for the abolition of the entire jurisdictional system.[47] The amendment was voted down by more than a two-thirds majority. Although it received little support, it represents rather widespread indifference or opposition to the jurisdictional system in the North and West. A second proposed amendment that received some support and was the cause of considerable debate called for the completion of the elimination of the Central Jurisdiction by 1968.[48] Two Negro members of the Central Jurisdiction who had been representatives on the Commission of 70 spoke in favor of establishing the target date. Charles Parlin spoke against the idea of a target date. He observed that the Commission of 70 had spent almost fifty per cent of the time utilized in debate on the issue of a target date, which had been an extremely emotional and sensitive issue. In the end, the attempt to set a target date was lost in the Conference. Proponents of a target date thought that it would overcome delaying tactics. Opponents thought that it would introduce coercion to an essentially voluntary procedure and might also create an atmosphere which would encourage foot-dragging until the last minute.

---

[47] Journal, 1960, op. cit., p. 306.

A third amendment, proposed by a delegate from the Southeastern jurisdiction, suggested abolition of the Central Jurisdiction by dividing it among the Northeastern and North Central Jurisdictions and Western Jurisdiction.[49] A variation of this introduced a little later would allow Central Jurisdiction conferences to accept invitations from jurisdictions prepared to receive them.[50] The only essential difference is that in the latter case the Central Jurisdiction conferences would have a determining voice in where and when they would move. Both of these amendments were designed to restore the historic relation of the Negro Conferences with the North. The argument for the amendment as originally put had several facets. Two delegates from the Southeastern Jurisdiction spoke at some length contending that this method would meet the demands for dissolution, give the Northeastern and North Central Jurisdictions, which had been pressing for dissolution, the opportunity to gain their desired end, and would remove the element of coercion to which the South objected. Both of these amendments were defeated. The principle objection to them was that annual conferences geographically in the South would be aligned with jurisdictions geographically in the North or West. This would remove the segregated Central Jurisdiction, but would do nothing to bring about desegregation in the Church at the local level. The concern for merging on geographical lines was to come to be one of the central elements in suggestions put forth by the Central Jurisdiction. At present, the Central Jurisdiction is opposed to entrance to the geographically defined jurisdictions unless there is a definite promise of merging of annual conferences.

---

[48] Ibid., pp. 312-319. [49] Ibid., p. 326.

[50] Ibid., p. 334.

A final major attempt to amend the Commission Report was aimed at the recommendations put forth by the Commission. The Report stated, as has been noted, that Methodist institutions failed to live up to the principle of inclusiveness, and, furthermore, often ignored policy statements from Church Boards and Agencies. Accordingly, it recommended that, "Every effort should be made to bring all Methodist-related institutions into full harmony with the policy of the church and its pronouncements on race."[51] An attempt was made to use the financial power of the Church to bring institutions into line with Church policy. In its original form, the amendment was aimed at Duke University only. The amendment called for the withholding of funds until the School of Theology at Duke accepted Negro students. The substitute did not include a direct financial sanction, but it did require all Methodist institutions that received Church funds to submit an annual statement of their racial policies and practices. Arguments against the amendments, put forth by southern delegates, suggested that it is wrong for the Church to try and coerce change, that change must finally come in the heart, that action such as this would jeopardize strong efforts already being made by courageous ministers in the South, that considerable money came from the South and it would be curtailed, and that such procedure was unchristian. The defeat of these amendments indicates further the commitment of The Methodist Church to the voluntary procedure as the sole means of attacking the internal race problem. The Committee on the State of the Church had been calling for years for study of the policies of Methodist institutions. This was the first real effort to have the Church use its tremendous financial power to being practice into line with principle. It is interesting to note that even the requirement that a statement of policy and practice be submitted was unable to gain support.[52] We should note that in addition to issues raised on the floor, hundreds of memorials were sent to the General Conference calling for the retention or abolition of the Central Jurisdiction. The memorials were dealt with in committee and resulted in no new action.

---

[51] Report of the Commission of 70, op. cit., p. 22.

[52] Journal, 1960, op. cit., pp. 480-489.

As noted previously, the Commission report was the subject of debate in church periodicals as well as news media beyond the Church. Of all the attacks on the Commission approach the one most crucial to this study is that of the faculty of Drew University Theological School. The Drew faculty statement is important in that it challenges the basic approach of the Commission of 70 on theological grounds. We should note, also, that a minority statement was issued by three dissenting faculty members. In this exchange embodied in the faculty statements we see in capsule form the confrontation of two kinds of thinking about the problem of race existing in the Church. On the one hand are those who feel that it is essential to work out the practical problems that are a barrier to racial equality in the Church. The problems are the unwillingness to work and worship on an interracial barrier on the part of some sections of Methodism, the existing differences in ministerial preparation, and the accompanying problem of salary and pension differential. On the other hand are those who feel that the commitment of the Church to racial inclusiveness requires that the Church take definite action and deal with the problems that arise as they come up. This approach emphasizes the theological foundation of the Church and the ethical demand to fulfill the commitment. Both sides recognize the practical and theological issues. The difference is in priority. The dominant position is that which argues that the Church must solve, then change. The position of those who are protesting is that the Church should change, then solve. Those who support the former position see disaster resulting from precipitous action. Those who support the later position argue for a protectionist policy that is essentially a method to delay effective change.

The basic charge by the Drew faculty majority is that the Commission approach is not explicity informed by the Christian faith. Beyond that, the statement complains that other principles than doctrinal ones have been substituted as the basis of the Commission approach. The failure to propose concrete steps to change the situation in the Church is attributed to the lack of a theological base. The majority questions whether the continuance of the Central Jurisdiction is not a violation of the unity of the Church to be found in Christ, and it sees the necessity of the Church's self-recognition of its sin in maintaining segregation. From that perspective, the majority statement raises some basic questions about the entire understanding that undergirds the position of the Commission of 70. It is worthwhile to note what is said since it calls into question the approach adopted by the Church at some of its central points.

> The report gives us the impression that, with the minor exception of the strengthening of Amendment IX in paragraph 26 of the *Discipline*, no practical step has been proposed which would lead us beyond the status of 1956. This is a grievous disappointment. Far worse is the complete absence of the ground for practical

> action, namely, that Christ is the Head and the Church is His Body. The practical fault is the result of the doctrinal. We judge that the counsel of defeat in this report stems from a deeply pessimistic theology. There is no confession of sin because there is no evidence of real faith in the grace and power of our crucified and risen Lord. The unity of the church is defined in purely secular terms parallel with the unity of the nation, and the "spirit of compromise" is substituted for the ministry of reconciliation. The church's strength is measured in "leadership, finance, membership growth, responsiveness to the general church program," and the Central Jurisdiction is defended because it insures "racial integration in the highest echelons of our church." It is admitted that "while the church opposes segregation in principle, it practices it in its organization;" but the preservation of the existing connectional system remains the supreme criterion for the future policy of Methodism. What the Report offers is the appointment of new committees "to establish policies on inter-racial brotherhood," and the pious hope that the "trend of events" will work against segregation.[53]

The Drew majority statement points to two aspects of the Church's position as represented in the Commission Report that deserve attention. The quoted passage calls attention to something we have noted before, namely, the fact that the Commission has stated that its central principle is "compromise." Secondly, the statement hits hard at the emphasis that is put on preservation of institutional unity and the bases on which the Church's strength is measured. We have noted before that the Commission appreciated well the problem of steering a course that would prevent disunity and also prevent injustice to the Negro members.

---

[53] "Drew Faculty Challenges the 70," Concern, March 11, 1960, p. 5. Also in a mimeographed form distributed by the Drew University Public Relations Office, pp. 2-3. In addition to the three members who wrote the minority report, it should be noted that Dr. Shippey abstained in view of his professional relation to the Commission of 70.

The question that is being raised in the Drew statement is whether that course has been successfully maintained. To the Drew majority, it appears that the Commission has erred on the side of prevention of disunity, that is, that it has been too protective of the connectional system while being unwilling to take any step to prevent injustice beyond recommending study committees.

A Minority Statement was also issued, representing the opposition of three members of the Drew faculty to the majority position. In that statement, the minority argued that immediate dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction would be disastrous, that Amendment IX was a forward looking measure and not a sanction of segregation, and that the Commission of 70 did not have authority to prepare a theological statement. The thrust of the minority report is directed at the disastrous results that would follow immediate elimination of the Central Jurisdiction. They point out that the Central Jurisdiction conferences lying in the Southeastern and South Central Jurisdictions would be detached from their present status and be put into the inferior status of Provisional Conferences (a Conference almost totally lacking in power, representation, or self-direction.) The minority contends, in rather sharp terms, that the majority has not dealt adequately with the facts.[54]

The majority statement recognizes that there are problems involved, but says, "We are told that 'Legislation alone cannot forcibly make us an inclusive church.' Is this a valid reason for not taking the next step?"[55] The key word in that passage is 'alone'. The majority is apparently arguing that legislation is a legitimate first step, a step that will move the Church beyond the status quo. It is clear that they see that other steps would need to follow. In apparent answer to their query on the validity of this reasoning, the minority says,

---

[54] "Minority Statement on the Report of the Commission for Study and action Concerning the Jurisdictional System," Drew University Public Relations Office, n. d.,

> If some group with the prejudiced outlook of a 'White Council' had proposed that 14 of the annual conferences of the Central Jurisdiction with their 265,000 members should be reduced from Full to Provisional status, this faculty would have protested vigorously, and rightly so. Yet it is to just such a disastrous result that the Majority Statement, if carried out, would lead. Against such an ethically indefensible, socially reactionary, and disastrous recommendation we, the Minority, protest.[56]

The conflict in the approach of the two faculty groups is apparent, and this presentation of their views helps to focus some of the areas of debate over the proper procedure of the Church. Moreover, the emphasis on theological foundation on the part of the majority statement serves to draw our attention back to the Uniting Conference of 1939. It will be recalled that at that time the Episcopal Address proclaimed that there would be no theological debates because there had been no separation in the faith. The Drew majority statement is one of the few instances in which theological questions are raised openly in the debates over the Central Jurisdiction up to this time. In that sense, it serves to raise the question again as to whether the moral issue of slavery has ever been squarely faced.

---

[55] Majority Report, op. cit., p. 5.

[56] Minority Report, op. cit., p. 2.

An interesting footnote to the debates at General Conference and to the exchange between the Drew faculty majority and minority is provided by an article written by Walter Muelder, Dean of the Boston University School of Theology and a member of the Commission of 70. In an article entitled "Methodism and Segregation: A Case Study,"[57] he analyses the many dilemmas facing the Church and some of the attacks on the Commission position, especially that of the Drew majority. In the course of his analysis he points out some of the central practical problems as well as the inheritance from Methodist history. On the one hand, he criticizes the Drew faculty for the lack of functional proposals and says that without such proposals the attack becomes mere ritual repentance.[58] On the other hand, he seriously questions the defense of the jurisdictional system on the part of the South on the grounds that it has merely been used as protection for racial patterns.

> Since the South has championed the jurisdictional system as a conservor of regional values it is well to inquire what these values are and whether the jurisdictional system is needed to protect them. No explicit list of such values has ever been developed. Whenever I have tried to get below the surface of the defense of jurisdictionalism, I have found an attack on central government, a fear that the General Conference would invade or intervene into the folkways, mores and customs of the South. Whenever I have tried to get explicit information about which values were at stake, I have found that it involved racial patterns.
>
> There is no doubt that unity in the constitution of the church was bought at the price of continued local segregation. This price was not only one of social justice but (and here the Drew

---

[57] Christianity and Crisis, Vol. XX, No. 5, April 4, 1960, pp. 39-42 and 44.

[58] Ibid., p. 40.

> critique is valid) one of the church itself. A church cannot define its actual Christian character by pointing to integration at the associative level of boards and agencies, but by what happens at the table of the Lord in a local church.
>
> The only thing the South has had to fear from the General Conference was lock-stiched into racial injustice. Abolish the Central Jurisdiction and the ultimate raison d'etre of the jurisdictional system is gone. But the idea of regional autonomy has become a fixed idea.[59]

The important aspect of Muelder's article is the way in which it demonstrates the situation in which the Church is caught. He opposes those who attack the approach taken by the Commission without proposing alternatives, but he attacks the defense of the existing situation as well. Perhaps the sentiment and the difficulty of the Church in the whole matter is represented in a passage in which Muelder comments on what happened when he was taking testimony as part of a sub-committee in the Central Jurisdiction.

> It was my responsibility to serve on the panel in the Central Jurisdiction. We held hearings in Baltimore, Orangeburg, New Orleans and St. Louis. The Negro testimony was almost unanimous to abolish the Central Jurisdiction. It would be difficult to overstate the feelings of laymen and clergy alike in their opposition to this "symbol of segregation." When, however, we asked for next steps for its abolition, clear ideas were hard to come by. Abolish the Central Jurisdiction as a constitutional fact and the Negro Methodists still have to face almost a complete absence of communication and fellowship in their local communities.
>
> A special dilemma faces the Negro bishops. Should they support the abolition of the jurisdiction and see their people set adrift in a hostile environment? The fact is that a large number of Central Jurisdiction churches are located within the Southeastern Jurisdiction. Should the Negro bishops encourage their stronger northern congregations, which help maintain the morale

---

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

> of the Negro Methodist community, to merge with the geographical conferences, leaving only weaker churches to carry on? Liquidation by attrition through use of Amendment Nine is an inadequate method of desegregation.[60]

Near the end of the article, Muelder questions the advisability of forcing a showdown by majority action at the Conference, but also feels that the Commission of 70 did not fulfill the assignment given to it. In the article, Muelder poses many dilemmas, but offers no solution. In a sense this is precisely what occured at the General Conference with the approval of the Commission Report which is based on the sole principle of compromise.

Despite the opposition noted, the approach supported by the Commission of 70 was overwhelmingly approved in the General Conference. The approval of Amendment IX by the annual conferences during the same quadrennium in conjunction with the General Conference action is conclusive evidence that The Methodist Church supported the voluntary procedure and the creation of understanding through study and contact as the way to attain inclusiveness.

It is clear that the heritage of the Separation and Union affected the deliberations in the Commission and in the General Conference. The most obvious affect, of course, was the Constitutional protection of regional social patterns built into the Union in 1939, which severely limited the possible scope of action. Beyond that, the fear of disunity supported strong advocacy for a position of non-action despite the conflict between Church principle and Church practice. The refusal to take strong legislative action, even to the extent that was available within the Constitutional framework, paralleled the response of the Church to the abolitionist pressure in the period just prior to Separation. The Church was faced with the choice of risking institutional stability or continuing to violate its stated principle that discrimination and segregation were a violation of Christian brotherhood at the price of segregation of its Negro members. Neither choice would have completely resolved the problem. However, by supporting voluntarism, which put the final determination of change in the hands of those most directly affected, the Church rejected any strong attempt to change existing pattern.

---

[60] _Ibid._, p. 44.

The fact that the Central Jurisdiction members had not yet formulated specific proposals indicates the complexity of the problem. We have commented that in this period Negro leadership began to emerge and affect the position of the Church. The judgment stands, but we see in the comment by Muelder that this process had not yet been completed. Four years later the situation was to be different. The years between 1960 and 1964 have been the crucial years in the acceptance of the Civil Rights struggle and its goals by the nation. This fact is most clearly seen in recent legislation. The change in climate in the nation has had a tremendous effect on the role played by Negroes of the Central Jurisdiction in the period since 1960. We proceed, then, to a discussion of the Report of the Commission of 36, the actions of the General Conference of 1964, and the position of the Central Jurisdiction.

The basic position of The Methodist Church toward removal of racial segregation and discrimination in the Church was established by the adoption of Amendment IX by the annual conferences and the action of the General Conference of 1960 in response to the Report of the Commission of 70. We have discussed the particular actions taken, the philosophy that undergirds those actions, and alternative courses of action that have been rejected. As we have seen, the General Conference of 1960 established the Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations (Commission of 36) and put into its hands, "The continuing program of The Methodist Church to abolish the Central Jurisdiction, promote interracial brotherhood through Christian love, and achieve a more inclusive church..."[61] It was clearly specified that the task of the Commission of 36 was to study, recommend, and expedite procedures under the voluntary process of Amendment IX. In our consideration of what was done in preparation for and during the General Conference of 1960, it was necessary to discuss at length the arguments supporting the position taken. The report of the Commission of 36 and the action of the General Conference of 1964 are based upon the thinking of the Church represented in the program adopted in 1960. Therefore, as we come to the discussion of 1964, our attention is directed more to the recommendations made and actions taken than to the philosophy behind them.

---

[61] Plan of Action, op. cit., p. 1.

1964: Ratification of the Voluntary Approach to the Problem.

The heart of the *Report* of the Commission of 36 was a Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction. In addition to the Plan of Action the *Report* contained a brief historical treatment of the problem before the Commission, some indication of what was occurring in the Central Jurisdiction and its effect on the work of the Commission, problems in utilizing Amendment IX, and specification of problems concerning pensions, salaries, ministerial requirements and itineracy. The *Report* was submitted to the Church for study and reaction several months before the meeting of the General Conference. Perhaps the most notable change contained in the *Report* in the understanding of the problem faced by the Church was the admission that the Church was constitutionally segregated on the basis of race. In previous discussion, it had been maintained that the Central Jurisdiction guaranteed integration at the highest level and that no constitutional bar existed to integration at the local level. This argument had been included in the Drew minority statement. The repetition of the word "only" in the following passage reflected the dilemma faced by the Church.

> The Jurisdictional system has brought Negroes into positions of leadership in our Church, given them representation substantially in excess of their numerical strength and has made The Methodist Church the only church in America (and perhaps in the world) thoroughly integrated at the top echelons and in the policy-making bodies. On the other hand, it has made us the only church in America which segregates, by its constitution, one sector of its membership on the basis of race.[62]

---

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

The Plan of Action was the method proposed to eliminate that situation.

The Commission of 36 issued two brief interim reports during the quadrennium. In both reports they suggested six actions that would help attain inclusiveness. It is worthwhile to quote the suggested actions here for two reasons. First, they represent the consistent thinking of the Commission since 1961 and form the basis for the Plan of Action. Second, the use of such words as "voluntary," "needs," "desires," and "ready" throughout indicates the full support of the Commission for the approach approved in 1960.

> 1. The encouragement of all church members to develop individual friendships, mutual understanding, and actual experience in worshipping, cooperating and working together in matters of mutual concern without regard to ethnic background. This effort must be constructively planned and placed on a solid and continuing basis.
>
> 2. The realignment of the Jurisdictions by the merging of the present Jurisdictions with appropriate Episcopal Areas, Conferences, or other units of the present Central Jurisdiction, as authorized by Amendment IX, to form new and enhanced Jurisdictional structures. This process will be voluntary and shall proceed at a schedule and in a manner dictated by the individual needs and desires of the merging units involved.
>
> 3. At a time when the last of the units comprising the present Central Jurisdiction has been transferred, that Jurisdiction will cease to exist and will be officially terminated as provided in Amendment IX.
>
> 4. Later, the merger of Conferences within the reconstituted Jurisdictions should take place. This should proceed as soon as all Conferences affected are ready for this move.
>
> 5. Ultimately -- depending on the desires of the members concerned -- it is hoped and expected that the final merger of individual congregations will become possible.

> 6. Concurrently, all boards, commissions, colleges, hospitals and homes, bookstores and other Methodist institutions are urged to comply fully with the spirit and intent of the Statement on Race (Par. 2026, 1960 Discipline).[63]

In the review of the work of the Commission, considerable attention was given to the effect of Central Jurisdiction action upon Commission proposals. The Commission had proposed a plan of transfer of five groups of Central Jurisdiction conferences to the regional jurisdictions as the means for elimination of the Central Jurisdiction. However, the Central Jurisdiction balked at the plan. The Northeastern Jurisdiction had issued an invitation to the Delaware, Washington, and North Carolina jurisdictions of the Central Jurisdiction to transfer to it, and the three conferences had voted overwhelmingly to accept the invitation. The remaining fourteen conferences of the Central Jurisdiction had voted against the transfer, however, which prevented its consummation.[64] The denial of transfer was based on a policy adopted at a study conference of the Central Jurisdiction. The Central Jurisdiction had decided to oppose transfer of conferences to regional jurisdictions in which they were not located geographically.[65] Since Central Jurisdiction conferences cut across regional jurisdictional lines at many points, the Central Jurisdiction had decided that realignment of its conference lines must precede transfer. The chief reason for this position, of course, was the Central Jurisdiction's primary concern for the elimination of segregation at the local level. Clearly, if a conference lying partially or wholly in the Southeast were to transfer to the Northeastern Jurisdiction, segregation would remain.

---

[63] Ibid., p. 8.

[64] Ibid., p. 9.

[65] Ibid., p. 9.

In order to accomplish transfer on the basis of geography, the Central Jurisdiction developed a plan to realign its conference boundaries so that each would fall within one regional jurisdiction. The plan was approved at the Central Jurisdiction Conference in 1964 following the General Conference.[66] The Commission was thus forced to abandon its suggested plan of transferring Central Jurisdiction conferences. It did strongly urge the Central Jurisdiction to hold a special session to complete the realignment prior to the meeting of the Central Jurisdiction, but the latter rejected this option.

The action of the Central Jurisdiction at this point, which will be analyzed more fully later, represents an important change in the handling of this problem in the Church. This action marks the end of the period of reluctant acceptance of the decision of whites begun in 1939 and the emergence of Central Jurisdiction leadership on the issue. The changes occurring in race relations in the nation may have encouraged Central Jurisdiction leaders to take an independent position. More important, the changes occurring in the nation spotlighted the segregation in the Church and increased the support for change. The very increase of support for termination of segregation in the Church, however, provided the Negro leaders with the necessary leverage to demand a voice in the nature of the change. This becomes even more evident later on. This particular response of the Central Jurisdiction did not affect the basic principle of the Plan of Action for Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction. It did, however, affect the timing, and, more important, prevented any method of elimination that would remove the symbol of segregation, the Central Jurisdiction, without providing for further steps at the local level. The Central Jurisdiction began to scrutinize every measure with an eye to what it would do for the life of its members in the local life of the Church. This was the essential difference between its approach and that of the Commission of 36.

---

[66] Journal of the 1964 Central Jurisdiction Conference, (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House), pp. 59-61.

The Commission reported that it had considered and rejected various proposals for Constitutional amendments designed to eliminate the Central Jurisdiction by 1968. The stated reason for rejecting the suggestions was that they would have to go to the annual conferences for approval, which might impair the chances of elimination on a purely voluntary basis during the 1964-1968 quadrennium.[67] The Commission felt that the chances of voluntary elimination were good and apparently felt that competing procedures might jeopardize progress. The most drastic of the rejected plans that they mentioned would have terminated the Central Jurisdiction and its conferences and automatically placed local churches into regional jurisdictional conferences where they were located.

---

[67] Report of the Commission of 36, op. cit., p. 19.

The heart of the Plan of Action is a two-step procedure for the attainment of inclusiveness in the Church. The Plan of Action contained a number of recommendations treating a range of problems involved in the elimination process. However, much of the criticism of the Plan of Action, especially from the Central Jurisdiction, has been aimed at the two-step process for transfer and elimination of Central Jurisdiction conferences. The two steps are contained in two of four recommendations for jurisdictional conference action following acceptance of the Plan of Action by the General Conference. The Commission did not call it a two-step plan, they did not call special attention to these recommendations, and in the Plan itself they do not even appear consecutively. However, the procedure outlined in these two recommendations determines the major thrust of the Plan and focuses the major area of conflict between Southeastern regional spokesmen and their counterparts from the Central Jurisdiction. Since the General Conference of 1964, the Central Jurisdiction has taken measures to mitigate against the possible delays under the two-step procedure by demanding guarantees from the receiving jurisdiction prior to agreeing to step one. The two-step procedure is found in the second and fourth recommendation of Part III of the Plan of Action, which contains proposals for the 1964 jurisdictional conferences.

> Recommendation 2: That each regional Jurisdictional Conference urge any of its Annual Conferences which have not already done so, to study and when feasible to vote in favor of transfer to it of the Central Jurisdictional Annual Conferences lying within its boundaries.

> Recommendation 4: That each Jurisdiction act, as promptly as details can be worked out and it is mutually agreeable, to merge Annual Conferences and in the process, establish a new episcopal area or areas, and assign the bishop who came from the Central Jurisdiction to an area.[68]

The Commission gave reasons for every recommendation, and as the reason for Recommendation 4, said simply, "The transfer of Annual Conferences is merely a first step." They immediately added, however, "The timing of the second step -- merging of Annual Conferences within a Jurisdiction -- will be a Jurisdictional matter to be worked out when such merger is mutually agreeable." The concern of some of the Church has been to eliminate the Central Jurisdiction because it stands as a symbol of segregation in a day when segregation barriers are falling in all areas of society. One argument consistently advanced was that continued segregation was hurting mission work abroad and the efforts to evangelize among Negroes here at home. Step one of the Plan of Action would eliminate the symbol. Every jurisdiction felt confident that step one could be accomplished within the quadrennium 1964-1968. The concern of Central Jurisdiction leaders, however, was not the removal of the symbol of segregation, but the attainment of full participation in the life of the Church in the communities and states where Central Jurisdiction members resided. They viewed the two-step procedure as a method of absolving the Church of the stain of segregation in the eyes of the world while maintaining segregation at the annual conference and local level for a prolonged period.[69] In consequence they have worked out their own proposals for minimum conditions and guarantees prior to any transfers.[70]

---

[68] Ibid., pp. 6-7.

The Plan of Action for Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction, as submitted by the Commission of 36, was divided into four major divisions, containing a total of twenty recommendations. The four divisions recommended action by the General Conference, the Council of Bishops, the Jurisdictional Conferences, and the Annual Conferences in turn. The recommendations dealt with such things as clarification of procedures under Amendment IX, provision for continued financial support of Central Jurisdiction institutions and adjustment of financial apportionments, delegates to any special sessions of jurisdictional conferences, and recommended steps to be taken by the annual conferences in preparation for utilization of Amendment IX.

In debate at the General Conference, several amendments were made, but the Plan of Action as passed was essentially the Plan of Action that was submitted. We shall focus on those recommendations which are central to the Plan of Action and the major questions raised about them in debate. The two most important debates on the Plan of Action at the General Conference were over the two-step procedure and financial aid for pensions and salaries. We have already outlined the issues involved in the two-step procedure. The debate on finances grew out of Recommendation 5, Part I, of the Plan of Action which dealt with proposed pension and salary support plans. The Commission called upon the General Conference to

---

[69] The Central Jurisdiction Study Commission, Bridges to Racial Equality in The Methodist Church, Report to the Central Jurisdictional Conference, 1964, pp. 15-17.

[70] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

> Direct the establishment of a Temporary General Aid Fund to be used, where necessary and requested, to support a plan to encourage a minimum pension rate in the Annual Conference of the Jurisdictions of thirty-five dollars ($35.00) per year of full-time and approved service....
>
> Strongly encourage the Annual Conferences of the Central Jurisdiction and the Conference with which the Central Jurisdictional Conferences or churches will merge, to lift the minimum salary levels for the pastors of Central Jurisdictional churches to that of the Conferences with which they have merged as rapidly as possible, thereby implementing the movement toward the inclusive Church.[71]

The problem of pension and salary differentials was one of the most difficult practical problems involved in the move towards inclusiveness. Shippey's study done for the Commission of 70 indicates the magnitude of the problem. In the entire Church, the average conference pension rate ranged from $8 per year to $67 per year. The average pension rate for the Central Jurisdiction was $16.29 compared to the average annual rate for all other conferences of $47.58 per year.[72] The average conference salary for Central Jurisdiction conferences was $2301 per year over against an average of $4733 for all other conferences.[73]

---

[71] Report of the Commission of 36, op. cit., p. 26.

[72] op. cit., p. 177.

[73] Ibid., p. 179.

The most devastating aspect of this whole problem, of course, was that a conference of the Central Jurisdiction and a conference of a regional jurisdiction occupying roughly the same area could have a pension rate differential of more than $35 per year and a salary differential of more than $3500 per year. Furthermore, since roughly one-half of all Central Jurisdiction churches were located in the area of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference, the burden of any attempt to fulfill the requirements for minimum salaries in each conference would fall most heavily on one jurisdiction. The differential between the Central Jurisdiction and other jurisdictions had increased by 1964.

Charles Parlin said during debate on the financial problem at the Conference that this was the issue over which there was the most argument in the Commission and on which there was the closest vote.[74] The Commission resolved its problem by proposing a definite pension plan but only encouraging action by the conferences on salaries. The Commission did include an appendix to its report providing a profile of salary differentials and a tentative plan for church-wide support of a minimum salary fund.[75] It left any action on salaries to the General Conference.

---

[74] Daily Christian Advocate, 1964, op. cit., p. 169. (Hereafter called DCA, 1964).

[75] op. cit., pp. 33-34.

When the recommendation for the establishment of a pension fund came before the General Conference, an amendment was proposed calling for establishment of a fund to supplement minimum salaries. After some debate, the amendment was passed.[76] The major argument in favor of establishing such an aid fund for salaries was that elimination of the Central Jurisdiction was going to bring a heavy financial burden on the Southeastern Jurisdiction, in particular, and that the entire Church ought to share the burden. In support of this position, which was taken by delegates from outside the South, it was firmly stated that support of financial aid by areas not involved to a great extent would give those who had been pointing their fingers at the South an opportunity to back up their convictions with some giving on their own part. As one speaker put it,

> The favorite pastime of those of us living in the North and West is to condemn the race sins of the South, without realizing the same insidious attitudes exist in our own hearts. It is time to cast the beam from our own eye, before we take the splinter out of our brother's eye. This is one of the ways in which those of us who are smug and live in the North and West, can put our resources where our speeches have been. . . .[77]

The chief argument raised against the amendment from the floor was that the salary schedule had historically been a matter for the annual conference and a fund supported by the entire Church would violate that tradition.

---

[76] DCA, 1964, op. cit., p. 169. The debate may be found on pp. 151-153 and 166-169.

[77] Ibid., p. 167.

The importance of the pension and salary funds resides as much in the principle established as in the amount of money involved. It was estimated that the pension plan would cost $240,000 and the salary plan would cost $270,000 during the quadrennium 1964-1968. Someone pointed out in the debate that the latter plan would cost Methodists in the United States twenty-five cents each during the quadrennium.[78] The aid funds are temporary, terminating in 1975 for pensions and 1981 for salaries. However, the peak periods for both plans come after the 1964-1968 quadrennium and will involve substantial outlay before they are concluded. The major purpose of the plans is to shore up minimum pensions and salary levels, and it is designed to operate prior to and after transfer out of the Central Jurisdiction. The principle of Church-wide responsibility for the pension and salary funds is the most important aspect of the plans. One of the major criticisms leveled at churches is that they too easily dispense a plethora of statements on issues without taking any substantial action. One of the surest measures of the commitment of a Church to any particular issue is its readiness to expend the funds necessary to support its words.[79]

---

[78] Ibid., p. 168. Later on in the Conference the figure for salary aid was increased. The figures quoted are substantial, and we do not want to negate their importance nor ignore their size. Yet, the total expenditure for the increased fund for pension and salary will be about $200,000 per year. The fund appears open to question on two counts: (1) the money is to be spent totally within the Church on ministerial support. When compared with the funds available for Church agencies to spend on programs in the community it completely dwarfs them. This will be a point of comparison with the United Church of Christ. (2) This problem has been called the most crucial facing the Church. It is interesting to quote from the Episcopal Address, 1948, to get an idea of what is possible when the Church gets fully behind a program. "The Crusade for Christ proved conclusively that when the total organization of the Church is concentrated upon a high and worthy objective, Methodism is well-nigh irresistible. . . . The Church sought $25,000,000 for relief, reconstruction, and service to a postwar world. The people contributed $27,011,243. . . ." Journal, General Conference, 1948, op. cit., p. 155.

The debate over the two-step procedure for transfer and merger of Central Jurisdiction annual conferences touched on the major area of conflict in the Church on how and when to eliminate segregation at all levels of the Church. The conflict was really between the Southeastern Jurisdiction and the Central Jurisdiction. The former was quite prepared to approve transfer of the Central Jurisdiction conferences to the regional jurisdictions, but it was insistent on retaining the controlling vote on the timing of merger in the hands of the annual conferences. The Central Jurisdiction leaders were quite fearful of a prolonged period of separation from conferences that shared the same geographical area if no guarantees were provided for the second step. We should recall that the Plan of Action emphasized that the timing of the second step is a jurisdictional matter to be worked out when merger is mutually agreeable.[80]

The issue was brought before the Conference by a proposed amendment to the Plan of Action designed to require jurisdictional conferences to exercise its powers of creation and maintenance of annual conferences in a manner consistent with the policy of The Methodist Church on elimination of racial segregation and discrimination from its organizational structure.[81] The effect of this amendment would have required that step-two be taken immediately after step-one since the maintainence of segregated conferences within a jurisdiction would have been a violation of Church law. A member of the Commission of 36 opposed the motion on the basis that it would have "cut across the whole theory of the report of the Committee of thirty-six."[82] The theory to which he referred, of course, was the voluntary merging of the conferences when it was mutually agreeable. In elaboration of his opposition, he said,

---

[79] Money is surely not the only measure of a Church's commitment, but most agency programs require money for staff, supplies, literature, etc.

[80] Report of the Commission of 36, op. cit., p. 30.

> After the second step of the Conferences merging into the jurisdiction, then, as rapidly as possible, we hope that the individual conferences within the jurisdiction can merge again so that there are no longer any segregated conferences, but if this thing is going to work, and we might as well say it: In great sections of the country, we have to have the second step of taking in the conferences by conferences first, and after one year, five years, or how long it takes, we hope that they will be able to merge with their brethren in the same jurisdiction.
>
> I am now back on the discussion of the motion. The intent of this motion is to skip that second step. It is to say that the minute that this motion is passed, that the only way that the church -- that a Central Jurisdiction church can be taken into a regional jurisdiction, is to go directly into the Annual Conference of the regional jurisdiction, and in fact, this says they will all have to be reconstituted. This would be an immense change and we, frankly, don't think it will be supported.
>
> As a member of the Commission, I want to point out that though this is an innocent sounding memorial, this would upset the entire voluntary schedule that we have proposed and that we feel will be carried out.[83]

The quoted passage, citing the necessity of time to work out merger, is taken from a statement made by a member of the Commission of 36 from the California-Nevada Annual Conference. He was supported in his argument for time by another member of the Commission of 36 from Ohio, who argued very strongly that the difficulties involved in the South Central and Southeastern Jurisdictions required time for adequate solution. In the Southeastern Jurisdiction especially, he said, "... there is need for dialogue. There is need for discussion. There is need for getting acquainted. There is need to work together and plan...."[84] In addition to the argument for time, a strong argument was made about the possible unconstitutionality of the proposed action. Charles Parlin stated that the Commission had had this proposal before it had decided not to act on it on the basis that it was a violation of the Constitutional authority of the jurisdictions to determine the boundaries of their annual conferences.

---

[81] DCA, 1964, op. cit., p. 161

[82] Ibid., p. 161.

[83] Ibid., p. 161.

The proposed amendment was voted down. It is difficult to know whether the desire for more time on the part of Southerners, supported on the floor by Northerners, or the constitutional argument had more force with delegates as they voted. Clearly, the proposed amendment was a challenge to the whole voluntary procedure that the Church had overwhelmingly supported. It is important to note the constitutional aspect of the problem, however. No matter what action the Conference had taken, it appears that the Commission's understanding of the unconstitutionality of forcing the jurisdiction to merge was valid. This is another clear piece of evidence of the important role that previous compromise has played in the current struggle over the Central Jurisdiction. The South protected itself against just such an action when it demanded the regional jurisdictional structure and certain protections for it in 1939.[85]

---

[84] Ibid., p. 164.

The two-step procedure and the pension and salary funds were the two most intensely debated aspects of the Plan of Action. The resolution of the two-step debate reveals the principle of internal desegregation to which the Church subscribes. The resolution of the funding problem represents the extent of the commitment of the Church to resolution of the internal race problem. The recommendations embodying these two elements of the Plan of Action represent the heart of the thinking of the Commission of 36 on the proper way to attack the issue. A third major aspect of the Plan combines a way of facilitating the operation of the Plan and a type of reserve clause in the event that the Plan of Action does not prove to be a workable way of voluntary elimination of the Central Jurisdiction during the quadrennium. The Plan of Action recommended the appointment of another Commission for the coming quadrennium, a Commission of 24, with the express mandate to draft a report to the General Conference of 1968 on a plan for the termination of the Central Jurisdiction if the voluntary procedure had not resulted in its dissolution by that time.[86] They went on to comment on the hope and expectation that the Central Jurisdiction would be eliminated on a voluntary basis. Yet, they recognized the impatience in the Church with delay and included the proposal for a plan of termination in 1968 to allay that impatience.

---

[85] An amendment to the Discipline, paragraph 527, was passed later on, in which it was stipulated that the Jurisdictional Conferences shall exercise their duties and powers in accordance with the policy of elimination of discrimination on the basis of race. The language concerning conference boundaries was missing, however, and the two-step procedure is thus maintained.

Subsequent to the submission of the Plan of Action to the Church, and prior to the General Conference, three members of the Central Jurisdiction submitted some proposed amendments to the Plan of Action to the executive committee of the Commission of 36. The latter was empowered to accept amendments on behalf of the Commission, and it accepted an amendment to the assigned task of the Commission of 24. The Commission for the new quadrennium was charged with the responsibility of working with Jurisdictions and Conferences through a specified list of procedures promoting joint meetings and interracial contact at all levels of Church life.[87] An amendment from the floor of the Conference added the requirement that each jurisdiction was to appoint an advisory council to help facilitate transfers and mergers by meeting with the Commission of 24 or another jurisdictional council at least once each year. The obvious intent of all of the amendments was to give responsibility to one agency to move the Church toward inclusiveness through specific procedures. The amendment directing the jurisdictions to appoint advisory councils is one of the few times that the General Conference has directed any agency or organizational body to take any specific action. In general, it has restricted its mandates to the use of the word "urge."

---

[86] Report of the Commission of 36, op. cit., p. 27.

[87] Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction, as passed, pp. 4-5 (pamphlet distributed after the General Conference.) and Proposed Amendments to the Plan of Action by three members of the Commission, April 15, 1964, Proposal 4.

Despite the inclusion of the specific procedures to be carried out, including joint meetings and planning, interracial pastor's schools, training conferences, and, where desirable, youth and adult camps, the opening of all churches for worship without regard to race or ethnic background, pulpit exchange, etc., the final statement of the recommendation for the Commission of 24 retained the heavy emphasis on voluntarism. This emphasis was underscored by a paragraph inserted in the *Plan of Action*, as passed, which appears to qualify the significance of the 1968 termination date to which the Commission of 24 is to address itself. The *Plan of Action*, as passed, makes the following comment on a termination date,

> The recommendation does not purport to fix a termination date or to prejudge the work or judgment of the new commission. No inference should be read into the recommendation. If, by September 1, 1967, all Central Jurisdiction Annual Conferences have transferred, the Central Jurisdiction will be dissolved and obviously no further plan for the dissolution of the Jurisdiction is called for. The theory of the recommendation is that if on September 1, 1967, all such Annual Conferences have not transferred, the new Commission shall draft "a plan". Such plan could be similar to the plan here submitted or radically different and propose constitutional amendments.[88]

---

[88] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

The importance of the proviso for a plan to be submitted in 1968 may loom much larger as the quadrennium ends than was anticipated in 1964. Since the General Conference of 1964, the Central Jurisdiction has suggested strongly that its conferences not transfer without adequate guarantees that merger will follow according to a rather definite plan. It is quite possible that this requirement will block transfer in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, which will put strong pressure on the Commission of 24 to bring in a strong plan to the General Conference of 1968.[89]

Two other provisions in the approved Plan of Action deserve mention. The Plan of Action as submitted by the Commission of 36 had included a recommendation that when a bishop was transferred to a regional jurisdiction from the Central Jurisdiction, the regional jurisdiction would be entitled to one more bishop in its quota and the Central Jurisdiction one less. The Plan of Action, as passed, was slightly changed, providing for a temporary change in jurisdictional quota.[90] This recommendation was designed to fulfill a two-fold task, insuring a place for the Central Jurisdiction bishop while preventing an excessive number of bishops for the Central Jurisdiction as it shrunk by transfer. The question of what to do with bishops of the Central Jurisdiction as transfers occurred was quite sticky. People who have lived in and supported a system of separation, or segregation, find it difficult to consider the possibility of having a Negro bishop. Consequently, the adopted Plan of Action attempted to insure an assignment for the bishops of the Central Jurisdiction following transfer. Of course, until step two is taken, the Negro bishop could just be assigned to the Negro annual conferences attached to the regional jurisdiction, thus avoiding the problem for a time, at least. The recommendation did not, of course, attempt to guarantee future election of Negro bishops, but it did provide a means by which they could be transferred with ease.

---

[89] An effort to set a deadline on elimination of the Central Jurisdiction at the General Conference failed. See DCA, 1964, op. cit. p. 219.

[90] Plan of Action, as passed, op. cit., p. 1.

Another amendment added to the approved Plan of Action appears to have been modeled on the protection provided bishops. The amendment extends protection of status to ministers. Many ministers in the Central Jurisdiction lacked formal educational qualifications required or expected in other jurisdictions, and the question had been raised about the status of these ministers when transferred. In addition, Negro ministers transferred to regional jurisdictions will undoubtedly have difficulty in being assigned to predominantly white churches. The Plan of Action, as passed, attempts to cover this matter as follows,

> Recommendation 2A:. . . Whenever a ministerial member of an Annual Conference of the Central Jurisdiction (whether on trial or in full connection) is transferred to an Annual Conference of another Jurisdiction either in connection with the transfer under Amendment IX of the church to which he is appointed or by reason of the dissolution or merger of his Annual Conference, he shall have the same rights and obligations as the other members of the Conference to which he transfers.[91]

---

[91] Ibid., p. 1

Despite the appointment system which exists in The Methodist Church, there are problems involved in the assignment of ministers across racial lines. A minister is seldom assigned if he would be totally unacceptable to the receiving congregation. Central Jurisdiction ministers are now demanding equal opportunity in the appointment process after transfer. The stipulation added to the discipline about the "same rights" will be used to press their case. On the other hand, such provisions may make some conferences more reluctant to proceed with merger.

The debate on the Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction was undoubtedly the most important aspect of the General Conference of 1964 related to the issue of race. There are a few other notable features pertaining to race that deserve mention. The portion of the Episcopal Address on Integration is quite significant in terms of the analysis being given in this dissertation. The statement of the bishops reads as follows,

> The official pronouncements of The Methodist Church on the race question are clear. That any minister or layman in The Methodist Church should have any question as to where we stand on this issue, is inconceivable. It is, therefore, most disturbing to see Methodists trying to justify segregation on the basis of weird interpretations of the Scriptures. We are dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal, all men are brothers, and all men are of eternal worth in the eyes of God. Prejudice against any person because of color or social status is a sin.
>
> Every minister proclaiming this fundamental Christian doctrine must have the backing of the whole Methodist Church. Every bishop and every district superintendent is bound by the discipline of the Church to oppose segregation and discrimination. Compromises in this field have brought nothing but shame to us and today

> we stand under the judgment of God. The Church which does not cleanse itself of this sickness, brings comfort to the enemies of Christ and betrays its Lord.
>
> We believe that this General Conference should insist upon the removal from its structure of any mark of racial segregation and we should do it without wasting time. This will cost the Negro Methodists some of their minority rights. It will cost some white Methodists the pain of rooting out deep-seated and long-held convictions concerning racial relations. But God Almighty is moving toward a world of interracial brotherhood so speedily and so irresistably, that to hesitate is to fight against God and be crushed.
>
> We believe that this General Conference should be able to say when it adjourns: The people called Methodists, by the grace of God, have moved forward toward removing segregation.[92]

This short statement, which is all that the bishops had to say on this subject that was paramount in the eyes of the Church and the nation in 1964, relates directly to the internal race problem in three important ways. First, we should make note of the comment on the effect that compromise in this field has had on the Church. Although the bishops do not specify the particular compromises to which they refer, we may note the centrality of compromise in our interpretation of the Separation and the Union. Furthermore, we must note the limitations that these compromises have placed upon possible alternatives today. Finally, we recall that the Commission of 70 had proclaimed that the single principle governing its approach was that of compromise. Surely the least that the bishops were saying was that it was now time to change the basic thrust of the approach of the Church. Second, several well publicized incidents of barring integrated groups from worship at Methodist churches in Mississippi occurred just prior to the General Conference. Students, theological school professors, and bishops had all been turned away from churches, some had been arrested. Certainly the bishops' statement was directed to this problem. The incidents are of importance to our topic in that they reveal the intensity of feeling in some parts of the South and the difficulty that the Church may encounter in its move to inclusiveness. We should note that the General Conference of 1964 passed an addition to the Discipline stating explictly that all persons, without regard to race, color, national origin, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend all worship services. They stopped short of adding that language for Church membership, although such understanding is implied. Third, the bishops point to the hard fact that both Central Jurisdiction members and others in the Church must be prepared to give up something. As we shall see, one of the central areas of disagreement between the Central Jurisdiction spokesmen and the Commission of 36 is over the question of how soon the cost to white Methodists is to be paid.

---

[92] DCA, 1964, op. cit., p. 15.

One very important action by the General Conference occurred in the process of debate over the proposed union between The Methodist Church and The Evangelical United Brethren Church. A motion was made by a delegate from Oregon that the Central Jurisdiction not be included in the new constitution.[93] After brief discussion, the motion was lost. A short time later, however, the issue was again brought before the Conference when a member of the Committee of Five of the Central Jurisdiction introduced the following motion,

---

[93] Ibid., p. 482

> That The Methodist Church record its judgment that the Central Jurisdiction Structure of The Methodist Church not be made a part of the plan of merger with the Evangelical United Brethren Church.[94]

In support of the motion, it was argued that it was contradictory to be asking leaders in the Central Jurisdiction to be working for dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction at the same time that there was discussion about continuing the structure in a united Church. Furthermore, he felt that this would be a repeat of the 1939 situation, when Negroes were given a choice of establishing a separate denomination, joining the C.M.E., A.M.E., or A.M.E. Zion churches, or staying in The Methodist Church, working within to persuade the Church to change. In 1939, the Negroes chose the latter alternative. That the present situation was different is seen in this statement,

> If you force this kind of choice in 1964-66, you are going to get a different kind of response, because no self respecting Negro in this day and time is going to carry this kind of structure over into the new church and it is going to be resisted all out. I think this General Conference needs to realize that.[95]

Charles Parlin, speaking for the committee on union between the two bodies, said,

> I think it is clearly my sentiment personally about getting rid of the Central Jurisdiction and getting rid of it as fast as we can. As I say, in the enabling act it is automatically provided that if the Central Jurisdiction has been abolished in the quadrennium as we hope, it will automatically come out of the constitution. The only question is if we have not for any reason succeeded, are we going to hold up ecumenical movement because of this? This is

---

[94] Ibid., p. 486.

[95] Ibid., p. 487.

> the question. I would say not. I would say we should move in 1966 and 1968 in connection with the ecumenical movement forward for church unity.[96]

His response clearly put the issue in terms of the priority in the eyes of the Church of the commitment to denominationalism over against commitment to removal of segregation.

On the Committee of Five motion the Conference voted 464 for the amendment and 362 against.[97] Although the union process is expected to take twelve years and the issue might never have arisen, the position of the General Conference on principle is quite important. This is the first time that a vote has been taken in the entire period since 1784 in which the moral position on race, now a stated principle of the Church, has taken precedence over preservation or growth of the institution.[98] The fact that the first attempt to remove the Central Jurisdiction from the proposed union failed and the second attempt passed after an impassioned and even threatening speech by one of the spokesmen for the Central Jurisdiction further confirms the view that Negroes have begun to take the lead in the Church on this issue.

One further action of the General Conference bears directly on segregation and discrimination in the Church. We may recall that the Commission of 70 and the Commission of 36 both referred to the failure of some Church agencies and institutions to carry out the policy of the Church on race in their practice regarding hiring and extension of service. We saw that in 1960 an attempt to get the General Conference to prevent distribution of Church funds to institutions that discriminated failed. In 1964, the Committee on Christian Social Concerns presented a report calling for an amendment to the Discipline which expressly stipulated a Church policy of non-discrimination toward hiring and utilization of staff. Accordingly, the following statement was entered in the Discipline.

---

[96] Ibid., p. 487.

[97] Ibid., p. 490.

[98] In a two page paper entitled, "Transfers and Mergers," the Committee of Five expresses regret that the revised proposed constitution does not preclude segregated structures, despite the General Conference action. Nov. 2-3, 1965, p. 2.

> It shall be the policy of The Methodist Church that all administrative agencies and institutions (including hospitals, homes, and educational institutions): (a) recruit, employ, utilize, recompense, and promote their professional staff and other personnel without regard to race, color or sex; and (b) fulfill their duties and responsibilities in a manner which does not involve racial segregation or discrimination.[99]

It is notable that despite the directive included in that passage, there is still no legislation that would withhold funds from any Church agencies failing to comply with the disciplinary requirement. At present, the Council on World Service and Finance is completing a study of all Church agencies and institutions to be submitted to the bishops in the Spring of 1966.[100] The limitation of action on the personnel matter to a policy statement raises questions about the depth of the commitment of the Church to inclusiveness.

---

[99] Doctrines and Discipline of The Methodist Church, 1964, (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1964) Par. 1083.

[100] DCA, 1964, op. cit., p. 707.

The Role of the Central Jurisdiction

The point was made earlier that one of the distinctive factors about the period since union has been the emergence of the leadership of Negroes. They had no real voice in the structuring of the Separation or the Union, and whatever was said for their case was said by a small group of northern liberals. In the present period, the situation has been gradually changing until today it may be demonstrated that Negroes are beginning to play a direct role in the course of action the Church is following on race in the Church. We have mentioned one or two instances of this in the discussion of the actions of the General Conference since 1940 and the reception of the reports of the special Commissions appointed by the General Conference. We now want to devote more careful and systematic attention to the role of Negro leaders of the Central Jurisdiction.

In a sense we are now scrutinizing the history of a movement that parallels that we have just discussed, although it touches and often becomes a part of the main movement of events within the Church. By isolating the particular role of the Central Jurisdiction, though, we can demonstrate the thrust of the argument that that role has become central. Our procedure will be, first, to list what has been done, indicating the action and date, and second, describing the nature of the attitude toward, and evaluation of, the Church's position. We will then note the type of response made by the Central Jurisdiction to the position of the Church.

A listing of the major aspects of the response of the Central Jurisdiction to racial segregation and discrimination in The Methodist Church includes:

(a) Episcopal Addresses to the Central Jurisdiction Conferences began almost immediately following Union to speak to the issue by recalling that Negroes in the Church had voted against the Union. As time went on, they spoke more to the problem of segregation.

(b) A special study commission was appointed by the Central Jurisdiction Conference in 1948 to do a broad ranged study of the Central Jurisdiction and make suggestions about the advisability of the continuation of the structure. The study commission was continued for the 1952-1956 quadrennium and an extensive report was submitted to the Central Jurisdiction Conference.

(c) In 1956 the Central Jurisdiction directed its efforts to participation in the work of the Commission of 70.

(d) Although having full representation on the Commission of 36, the Central Jurisdiction Conference again appointed its own Study Committee, the Committee of Five, which carried on independent study and responded to the reports of the Commission of 36 with specific criticisms and recommendations.

(e) In 1962, the Central Jurisdiction held a special study conference at the request of the Committee of Five in which over two hundred Conference leaders participated. It was at this Study Conference that the leadership of the Central Jurisdiction began to assert itself. The results of the Study Conference were published in Central Jurisdiction Speeches.[101]

(f) In response to one of the major recommendations of the study conference, the Committee of Five prepared a Study Document on Realignment of the Central Jurisdiction as a basis for realignment of annual conference lines so that each annual conference would fall within the lines of one of the regional jurisdictions.

(g) In 1964, after the submission of the Plan of Action to the Church and before the General Conference, three Central Jurisdiction members of the Commission of 36 submitted a series of amendments to the Plan of Action directed at particular recommendations unacceptable to the Central Jurisdiction. These amendments produced some changes in the Plan of Action.

(h) The Committee of Five, as an official agency of the Central Jurisdiction, and thus of the Church, submitted a series of memorials to the General Conference directed at changes at many levels in the Church structure.[102]

(i) After the General Conference and prior to the Central Jurisdiction Conference of 1964, the Committee of Five prepared a document to be submitted to the Central Jurisdiction Conference containing specific recommendations on how the Central Jurisdiction should proceed under the Plan of Action as adopted in order to insure that inclusiveness would in fact occur.[103]

---

[101] By The Committee of Five, 1962, includes recommendations of the Study Conference and a "Joint Declaration of the Central Jurisdiction Study Committee and College of Bishops" issued several months after the Study Conference.

[102] See The Committee of Five, Creative Pursuit of An Inclusive Church, February, 1964.

(j) The Central Jurisdiction Conference of 1964 adopted the realignment plan and other recommendations of the Committee of Five. The latter contained a suggested transfer-merger procedure to protect against the extended existence of racially separated conferences within any regional jurisdiction.

(k) The Central Jurisdiction successfully brought some matters before the Judicial Council for decisions that would support the transfer-merger process and establish the right of the General Conference to pass legislation that would guarantee inclusiveness in structures within the regional jurisdictions after transfer.

As we have already noted, the Central Jurisdiction Conferences voted overwhelmingly against the Plan of Union and began to study the structure with an eye to change shortly after Union. One of the most crucial factors in the understanding of the problem in the Church by the Central Jurisdiction has been its consistently stated view that the structure of the Central Jurisdiction is not the heart of the problem and, thus, removing that structure alone will not solve the problem. This pinpoints the major area of conflict in the approach of the Church through

---

[103] The Committee of Five, Bridges to Racial Equality, Report The Central Jurisdiction Conference, 1964.

Amendment IX, its Commissions, and the Plan of Action it adopted over against the approach of the Central Jurisdiction. The efforts of the Church have been directed to the elimination of the Central Jurisdiction as the end to be achieved, with inclusiveness beyond that an ill-defined relationship attainable at an unspecified future date. The Central Jurisdiction, on the contrary, has consistently aimed at a deeper problem than that presented by the jurisdictional structure.

It is important to note this, because the Central Jurisdiction has lately come under fire for dragging its feet by putting up barriers to the operation of Amendment IX. In the year that Amendment IX was passed, the Study Commission of the Central Jurisdiction for the quadrennium 1952-1956 reported the following,

> The major and central problem concerning Negroes in The Methodist Church is segregation. This problem is not inherent in the Central Jurisdiction (alone), but in the purposes, the minds, attitudes, traditions and customs which have given birth to separation and segregation on the lower structural levels of the Church and the larger community in which the Church exists.
> . . . removal of segregation does not follow inevitably with the abolition of the . . . Central Jurisdiction. There is and most likely will be segregation with or without the Central Jurisdiction until some other conditions are met.
>
> (Negroes are likely to delude themselves if they) think that merely shifting a Negro church from a Negro conference to a white conference removes segregation. This procedure merely shifts segregation from one conference to another.[104]

They proceeded to make a number of specific recommendations calling for open door policies of admission and hiring in all Church agencies.

---

[104] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

We must note that in 1956, although the depth of the problem in the Church was properly diagnosed by the Central Jurisdiction, the suggestions that were made were very general and of a limited nature. We may recall Walter Muelder's comment that hearings in the Central Jurisdiction by the Commission of 70 produced few definite procedural suggestions.

The position stated in 1956 has been reiterated many times. Thus, in 1962, the Central Jurisdiction Study Conference said,

> We regard the Central Jurisdiction as both a fact and a symbol of racial segregation in The Methodist Church. But it is also obvious to us that this racially segregated administrative structure is only one of a number of unmistakeable manifestations of racialism within the fellowship and policy of The Methodist Church.[105]

The immediate effect of this thinking was the development of a plan of realignment of annual conference boundaries, which was published and sent to the Church. In that document, we find the following,

> There can be no justification for abolition of the Central Jurisdiction in such a way as to prolong unduly the existence of racially segregated annual conferences or limit, solely on the grounds of race or color, opportunities for spiritual and intellectual growth and Christian service.
>
> The Central Jurisdiction 'must be abolished within a framework of overall planning and programming which will facilitate rather than impede achievement of the goal of equality within The Methodist Church.'[106]

As we see, the emphasis has definitely focused on planning beyond the dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction. That planning becomes more specific later. The attitude of the Central Jurisdiction toward abolition as a goal may be seen in a statement made by W. Astor Kirk, a member of the Committee of Five, at the Second Methodist Conference on Human Rights, in August, 1963.

---

[105] Central Jurisdiction Speaks, op. cit., p. 7.

[106] The Committee of Five, Study Document on Realignment of the Central Jurisdiction, (c. Dec., 1962), p. 2.

> With regard to the polity, administrative organization, programs, and processes of The Methodist Church, the fundamental objective must be 'a Christian fellowship completely uncircumscribed, at all levels of church life, by distinctions based on race or color.' The abolition of the Central Jurisdiction, as important as it may be, is not in itself the primary goal. Elimination of this racial unit from the institutional structure of The Methodist Church will have real significance only to the extent that its disappearance will clearly promote an inclusive fellowship. As defined by the Committee of Five, the concept of 'inclusiveness' embraces at least three things...[107]

He goes on to define inclusiveness in very specific terms which go far beyond the abolition of the Central Jurisdiction. In brief all privileges, opportunities, and obligations will not be limited by race or color; all social welfare, educational, and recreational institutions shall serve and hire without regard to race or color; and the "Methodist fellowship, in all its dimensions, will be based on the principle, affirmed by the New Testament church, that all persons who respond to the call of God in Christ enter into a new relationship with one another."

The point that we note here is that the Central Jurisdiction has defined inclusiveness in much more specific terms than any other agency in the Church. Furthermore, the goal of inclusiveness and its definition have shaped the proposals and actions of the Central Jurisdiction leaders.

---

[107] "The Central Jurisdiction Problem," before the Second Methodist Conference on Human Relations, Chicago, August 26-30, 1963, p. 5. (printed and distributed.)

The spokesmen for the Central Jurisdiction have become increasingly unhappy with Amendment IX. At first it was viewed as a beginning and accepted as a step forward. Later, criticism grew as its limited operation became manifest and, more important, the possibility of long delay toward the attainment of inclusiveness following step one became recognized. The Central Jurisdiction had participated in the Commission of 70 and was fully represented on the Commission of 36. But, the appointment of the Committee of Five in 1960, with a mandate to seek and propose alternative methods, was a sign of the disenchantment with Amendment IX and the Commission of 70's recommendation for no change in the structure. A statement on Amendment IX by the Committee of Five in an introduction to some memorials to the General Conference, reveals the attitude towards Amendment IX and touches again on the different goals of the Church, as represented by the General Conference, and the Central Jurisdiction.

> The legislative history of Amendment IX in the General Conference of 1956 indicates quite clearly that the amendment was not consciously designed as a tool to eliminate racial segregation from The Methodist Church. Its purpose was simply to provide a means of removing from the polity of our church the most visible national form of racial segregation -- the Central Jurisdiction, a racially segregated administrative structure stretching across approximately two-thirds of the country.[108]

In a real sense, the appointment of the Committee of Five at the Central Jurisdiction Conference following the General Conference of 1960 signifies the crystallization of protest against the course the Church was taking and marks the emergence of the leadership of the Central Jurisdiction. The Jurisdiction continued to work with the Commission of 36, but carried on its own study and analysis of the problem as well. The Committee of Five, recognizing that Amendment IX was the available method of change in the Church, has centered its efforts on trying to insure that the Church would use it effectively. Among its methods have been the following: (1) It criticized an early plan of the Commission of 36 and succeeded in gaining acceptance of realignment of Central Jurisdiction boundaries as a first step. There was criticism of the Central Jurisdiction at this point for delaying the process of dissolution. The conflict over method reveals again the descrepancy between the primary goals of the Central Jurisdiction over against those of the Commission and the Church. The primary concern of the Committee of Five, whose position was endorsed by the Central Jurisdiction Study Conference, was that transfer under the plan as proposed by the Commission of 36 would mean an extended period of segregation at the local level. (2) The Committee of Five and the Bishops of the Central Jurisdiction convened a Study Conference in 1962 which endorsed the policy of realignment and proceeded to set down recommendations that would enhance the movement towards inclusiveness at all levels. (3) The Committee of Five produced the realignment plan, which was later adopted. (4) They prepared numerous memorials to the General Conference to try to make Amendment IX a more effective vehicle for change. (5) They prepared a document for the Central Jurisdiction Conference of 1964 which contained a series of recommendations designed to insure movement towards merger, or inclusiveness, following transfer. These measures, if followed, will tend to erase or minimize the delays possible under the two-step process of the Plan of Action. The insistence on guarantees could lead to delay in the completion of step-one, but the fact that the Central Jurisdiction will retain full representation on all boards and agencies until eliminated may serve as pressure toward elimination. The Plan of Action, as originally formulated, would have put annual conferences not transferred voluntarily into a special category, and the full representation of the Central Jurisdiction would have been lost. The Committee of Five was successful in removing that recommendation from the Plan of Action and insuring that whatever portion of the Central Jurisdiction remained would have full status.

---

[108] Creative Pursuit of an Inclusive Church, op. cit., p. 2.

The major function of the Committee of Five has been to find ways to make the procedure under Amendment IX more effective. It has brought about changes in the procedure through appeal to the Commission of 36 and to the General Conference. Where it has not succeeded in bringing change, it has devised its own plans designed to mitigate what to it are the worst aspects of the Plan of Action adopted by the General Conference. Proposals that it has put forth have been designed to meet weaknesses or gaps in the procedure under Amendment IX. Its proposals have been designed to circumvent what it sees as three fundamental weaknesses in the Plan of Action, stated as follows,

--

> (1) It is based on the myth of "voluntarism," and hence it ignores the realities of The Methodist Church as a major social institution as well as the power of racialism as an operational principle of that institution. From the standpoint of the paramount secular interests of the church, there may appear to be valid reasons for the reluctance to eliminate all forms of racial segregation and discrimination. The naive concept of "voluntarism" advanced by the Commission tends to provide a respectable rationale for such reluctance.
>
> (2) The commission's Plan of Action is based on the premise that a system of racially segregated annual conferences in the regional Jurisdictions is a practical necessity if the Central Jurisdiction is to be dissolved. According to the commission, such a system can only be eliminated when that goal is "mutually agreeable" to all the parties involved.
>
> (3) The Plan of Action proposed by the commission does not provide a framework of church law or a pattern of institutional arrangements within the church in which Methodists in the different Jurisdictions can work cooperatively toward elimination of racial segregation and discrimination in our Methodism.[109]

The measures devised by the Central Jurisdiction to combat the weaknesses in the method adopted by the Commission and the Church have fallen into three groups. (1) The first major action taken by the Central Jurisdiction was its formulation of a plan to realign its conference boundaries so that no conference would fall into two regional jurisdictions. This plan grew out of a response to the first plan submitted by the Commission of 36 in 1961. The objection of the Central Jurisdiction was that annual conferences lying wholly or in part in the Southeastern Jurisdiction would be attached to other regional jurisdictions. The contention was that such alignment would preclude inclusiveness at the local level and merely substitute one form of jurisdictional segregation for another. The realignment plan, approved by the Central Jurisdiction Conference, marks the transfer of initiative from whites in the Church to Negroes.[110]

---

[109] Bridges to Racial Equality, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

(2) The second major response of the Central Jurisdiction was aimed at enhancing the operation of Amendment IX and insuring a move towards inclusiveness in areas of Church life not directly touched by Amendment IX. In addition to the direct benefit derived from the changes brought, this particular effort demonstrates the consistent thinking of the Central Jurisdiction that all aspects of Church life are interrelated and, thus, any plan must be comprehensive. The Committee of Five submitted twelve memorials to the General Conference of 1964 aimed at producing change in broad areas of Church life. In the introduction to the memorials, the Committee of Five said, "The experience of the committee has led its members to share a common conviction: That the Central Jurisdiction cannot be dissolved in a Christian manner without fundamental changes in the main body of church law."[111] There were memorials aimed at guaranteeing open worship, programs, and membership; at jurisdictional and conference programs; at procedures under Amendment IX; at policies of recruitment and admission to Church institutions; and at methods of insuring implementation of policies enacted. Almost all of the proposed amendments passed, al-

---

[110] See Central Jurisdiction Speaks, and Study Document on Realignment of the Central Jurisdiction.

[111] Creative Pursuit of an Inclusive Church, op. cit., p. 2.

though there were important changes in language. One significant change was the removal of specific prohibition of segregation and discrimination and the substitution of a requirement that practice be "in harmony" with Methodist policy. One of the problems with this language is that Methodist policy has been variously interpreted to support different practice. Nevertheless, express stipulations about Church policy were inserted in the Discipline. Three memorials failed to bring about change. All three would have been strong measures geared to guarantee inclusiveness. Their failure demonstrates the gap that still remains between principle and practice. Memorial 7 would have required withholding funds from any Church agency supported by the entire Church until it had been certified in writing that open recruitment, employment, utilization, and promotion had become an established policy.[112] Memorial 10 would have withheld funds from educational institutions which had discriminatory admission and hiring policies.[113] Memorial 11 would have required that all hospitals and homes offered their services on a non-discriminatory basis.[114] The Church has consistently refused to use its great financial power to facilitate the movement towards inclusiveness. This has caused considerable feeling in the Central Jurisdiction that stated policy has little or no meaning. When the issue has been raised at General Conference, the point has been made that large sums come from the area at which any sanctions would be directed. The prospect of intra-Church warfare over money necessarily mitigates against precipitate action. The practical problems are clear and can be appreciated. They only add weight, however, to the argument that statements and resolutions are empty words.

---

[112] Ibid., p. 12.

[113] Ibid., p. 14-15.

[114] Ibid., p. 15.

(3) The third major action taken by the Central Jurisdiction is the adoption of recommendations for procurement of agreement on steps toward inclusiveness by the receiving conferences. This is the major area of conflict with the theory promulgated and defended by the Commission of 36. The Central Jurisdiction Conference adopted the following criteria suggested by the Committee of Five for transfer of an annual conference to one of the regional jurisdictions.

> (a) Agreement of the receiving regional Jurisdiction that all of its annual conferences shall be so constituted as to include all local Methodist churches in a designated geographical area, regardless of the racial characteristics of the membership of the local churches.
>
> (b) Agreement of the annual conferences of the receiving regional Jurisdiction that they shall implement the law of The Methodist Church guaranteeing to ministers of the transferring Central Jurisdiction conference the same status, rights, privileges and responsibilities under the same conditions as other ministers of those conferences.
>
> (c) Agreement of the annual conferences of the receiving regional Jurisdiction that opportunities for lay participation in and enjoyment of the benefits of all programs, activities, and institutions of those conferences shall be provided without regard to race or color.
>
> (d) Agreement of the Jurisdictional Conference of each receiving regional Jurisdiction involved that it will request the Council of Bishops to transfer to that regional Jurisdiction

> for presidential and residential supervision the bishop of the Central Jurisdiction assigned to preside over the transferring conference (or conferences).[115]

The first of the criteria attempts to overcome the open endedness of the two-step process incorporated in the Plan of Action. The Committee of Five said that the General Conference did not take this step primarily because of opposition of the Commission of 36.[116] This action by the Central Jurisdiction is a direct attempt to force that which was blocked at the General Conference. This is perhaps the clearest evidence of the conflict between the two approaches. The other criteria are directed at insuring specific types of inclusiveness after transfer and merger have been consummated. If the Central Jurisdiction is able to demand and get elimination of the Jurisdiction on these terms, it will have pushed the Church far beyond the requirements of the Plan of Action. This, of course, is another clear sign of the dominant role now being played by Negroes in the Church on this issue.

Establishment of criteria for transfer has been followed by several supporting measures. (1) The Committee of Five has issued a small paper recommending that all Central Jurisdiction annual conferences adopt resolutions at their 1966 meetings providing for the abolition during the 1964-1968 quadrennium of all transferred racially segregated structures.[117] (2) A small booklet has been distributed, entitled

---

[115] Brideges, op. cit., 32-33. [116] Ibid., p. 24.

[117] The Committee of Five, Transfers and Mergers, Nov. 2-3, 1965.

Suggestions for Successful Mergers, containing detailed recommendations for planning and consummating mergers.[118] (3) The Committee of Five has gained a decision from the Judicial Council of the Church which supports its attempts to secure merger agreements prior to transfer. The issue arose out of an attempt by the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference to require Conference approval for mergers, although it supported transfers. The effect of this requirement would be the delay of merger until the next conference session in 1968. Any mergers not complete at that time would have to wait another four years at least. The Southeastern Jurisdiction sought a ruling on this requirement, and the Judicial Council sided with the opposition argument of the Central Jurisdiction. Furthermore, the Judicial Council ruled that desegregation in the Church is a connectional matter, which means that the General Conference can legislate, if it so desires, such measures as are needed to accomplish the dissolution of segregated structures. We should note that certain Constitutional powers remain to the jurisdictions which may limit the power of the General Conference. But, it has been clearly stated that the jurisdictions cannot establish conferences that are based on race.[119]

---

[118] By Richard C. Stazesky and Winston Taylor, n. d., Dept. of Human Relations, Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, Board of Christian Social Relations.

[119] See, The Committee of Five,"Regional Segregation?" Petition and Brief for a Declaratory Decision, March 15, 1965; "Integrating Methodism," Christian Century, Jan. 5, 1966, pp. 3-4; "Distinctively Connectional," Concern, Jan. 1-15, 1966 (Reprint); and "a clear and worthy VIEW," Statement of W. Astor Kirk, before the Judicial Council of The Methodist Church, Oct. 21, 1965.

The Place of Negroes in The Methodist Church

The Central Jurisdiction problem is just one aspect of the issue of race faced by The Methodist Church. The Church is also concerned about other aspects of segregation within the structure as well as with segregation and discrimination in American society. Its goal of inclusiveness applies to both Church and society. Yet, the Central Jurisdiction problem has commanded so much time and attention in the Church that the manner in which it has been handled reveals much about the problems the Church faces in terms of race, its will to deal with them, and the methods it will likely approve as it deals with other aspects of race. Therefore, this is a proper point at which to take stock of what the analysis of the place of Negroes in the Church from 1784 to 1965 tells us about The Methodist Church and Race.

(1) Historical Inheritance. One of the major themes of this dissertation is that the contemporary problem and efforts to meet it have been strongly shaped and limited by crucial events in the past. Our study thus far has revealed that the historical relation of Methodists and Negroes has affected the current situation in at least four major ways.

(a) In every period, the issues of regional autonomy and the place of Negroes in the Church have been inseparably related. In the first period, the intersection of issues occurred in the dispute over Bishop Andrew, the slave owning bishop; in the second period the relation of the issues was evident in the form that the jurisdictional structure took; and in the third period, protection of peculiar regional or sectional social relations has affected the course of action of the Church. Southerners have always declared that regional autonomy was the central issue, and the social relations of the races has entered in ancillary fashion. Those northerners who have opposed the position of the Church in any of the three periods have always accused southerners of using regionalism as a guise to continue protection of slavery or segregation.

(b) Compromise or split. Since the early part of the nineteenth century, the Church has been faced with the choice of compromising on its moral stance on race or risking schism. In the first period, the Church chose national growth at the price of its stated stand on slavery. In the second period, the Church chose a national body at the price of segregation of its Negro members. In the third period, the threat of disunity was always present if the stated principle of inclusiveness was not muted or compromised. We should recall that the Commission of Seventy proclaimed that compromise was the single principle on which it operated.

The Church has consistently chosen compromise at the price of the interests of Negro members whenever it has been faced with the threat or risk of disunity. In each case, the majority in the Church has been dominated by the minority. This has been true in every period. In 1844, the only time at which southerners were balked, there were two minorities competing for the allegiance of the majority in the center.

As we have said before, compromise in itself is not evil. The compromise on race might have been justified in the first period, at least, if every effort had been made to hold the nation together. There is less justification for the compromise in the second and third periods unless it can be demonstrated that the accomplishments of the national Church over against what might have been done by the separated bodies takes precedence over the concern for Negroes in the Church. Whether this can be demonstrated or not, the evidence is clear that inclusiveness is a limited or secondary goal of the Church, despite affirmations to the contrary.

(c) Constitutional limitations. One evident effect of past encounters between the northern and southern sections of the Church is the limitation on possible courses of action structured into the Constitution in 1939. There was a division of power and authority among the General Conference, jurisdictional conferences, and annual conferences, which were each given specific duties. In addition, Constitutional amendments require a proportionate vote necessitating support from the populous Southeastern and South Central Jurisdictions. The chief effect of the Constitutional structure is limitation on the power of the General Conference to bring about any basic change in the Church.

Thus any plan designed to eliminate segregation in the Church requires the approval of the Southeastern and South Central Jurisdictions. Amendment IX was approved by the overwhelming majority of annual conferences in all parts of the country, and the Plan of Action for Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction received the support of spokesmen from all jurisdictions. However, both of these leave effective veto power or protection in the hands of each section. Amendment IX requires a two-thirds vote by the receiving body. The Plan of Action has the two-step procedure which permits the removal of one level of segregation while retaining another.

The southern section of the Church was determined to prevent the kind of confrontation in the General Conference that resulted in the Separation of 1844. Therefore, during all the deliberations leading to Union, it demanded and received adequate protections for its social structure in the Plan of Union.

(d) Voluntarism. Voluntarism may be seen as merely a conceptual expression of the structural limitations and regional protections of the Plan of Union that we have just discussed. It is also a method, however, which greatly extends the protections afforded in the Church structure. The most significant element of voluntarism is that it removes the initiative from the total Church and gives it to those directly affected. Thus, instead of pressing as hard as possible through General Conference action and putting jurisdictions and conferences on the defensive, the procedures adopted by the Church allow conferences and jurisdictions to act when they desire. In fact, it has been consistently made clear that action will follow when those most directly concerned are "ready," when it is "desireable," or when it is "Mutually agreeable." Thus, moral action becomes subject to the popular approval of those most directly concerned.

The most obvious reason for adoption of voluntarism as the principle on which the Church is to proceed is the threat of a new schism. Those who support voluntarism argue that a consensus is necessary before any basic change can be made in an area of concern such as relations between the races. Those opposed to voluntarism see it as evidence of the Church refusing to face up to what is involved in segregation and what is required to bring about inclusiveness.

The major question about the effectiveness of voluntarism is the basic willingness of all regions in the Church to use it. This has been the crux of the argument over the two-step procedure of the Plan of Action. The argument before the Judicial Council between the Southeastern and Central Jurisdictions reveals the disagreement over intentions and expectations among Methodists.

(2) In addition to what our study thus far has revealed about the importance of central historical confrontations and events in shaping the present confrontation, we are able to discern a number of areas of disagreement over procedure and understanding of the issues. They reveal some insights into The Methodist Church which may be useful later on.

(a) The nature of the problem. One of the major disagreements in the Church is over the definition of the problem faced. The dispute is between those who see the Church's problem as the symbol of segregation embodied in the Central Jurisdiction and those who see it as the fact of segregation in the local life of the Church and its institutions. The argument over procedures reveals the chasm in thinking about the problem most clearly. This has been the heart of the opposition on the part of the Central Jurisdiction spokesmen.

Perhaps at the base of the problem is the thinking that still remains in the Church about the Negroes an homogenized mass. There are statements of concern about what "they" want and what "they" will lose. We have already noted the statement of the bishops in which they spoke of the race producing such individuals as Marian Anderson. As long as Negroes in the Church are thought of as a group rather than individuals, the discord in understanding of the problem will remain. We must note, of course, that some Negro spokesmen, avidly desiring change, have nevertheless argued for certain protections. This complicates the problem of transition and also supports those who treat the Negroes only as a group.

(b) Procedure. There is a basic dispute about how to proceed. Those who have played the strongest role in shaping the method adopted by the Church have argued that it is necessary to make all necessary adjustments prior to change. Those who have opposed the method adopted as foot-dragging have argued that it is best to change, to do the right thing, and then pick up the pieces. The former argue that the latter course is anarchy. The latter argue that the former course is failure of nerve and an unwillingness to live up to the stated moral position of the Church. This was the type of argument raised by the statement of the majority of the Drew faculty.

The question arises here as to whether the problem the Church faces is essentially one of adjustment of structural arrangements or of erasing a social evil that violates the very center of that for which the Church stands.

It is interesting to note that one of the major issues is that of money. We may recall that Parlin indicated that this was the issue that required the most discussion in the Commission of 36. Although the parallel is not exact, it is worthwhile to remember that the major issue at the time of the Separation, and the one which finally brought the Separation into the Courts, was money.

The question raised over the procedure adopted by the Church is the genuineness of its resolve to eliminate segregation from its life. This same question arises in relation to several other items noted below.

(c) The refusal to use financial power. The General Conference has consistently refused to use the financial power of the Church as a weapon or as a punitive measure for Church institutions that refuse to align their practice with Church principle, despite consistent efforts to adopt such measures. Here again, the commitment of the Church to inclusiveness, and its resolve to bring about change is called into question.

(d) Study and contact as essential to change. The measures proposed by the Commission of 70 and the Commission of 36 to bring about change in the life of the Church have centered on study and contact at all levels. Although these are undoubtedly essential components of any process of change, there is some question as to whether they should be the only measures, or even the prime methods used. Study and contact require a great deal of time to be effective and have been seriously questioned on the basis that they can reinforce as well as break down prejudice if certain requisite conditions are not met. This will be discussed. Once again, however, the question of resolve to change is raised.

(e) Role of Negroes. Finally, the role of Negroes as an effective force in the Church has become evident in recent years. The Negro leadership has developed sound plans of its own, and it has been able to use the desire of the Church to rid itself of the Central Jurisdiction as a symbol of segregation as leverage to insure further steps by resisting what it deems inadequate change.

The Methodist Church faces tremendous practical problems in bringing about thoroughgoing change in its structure and in its life. The Episcopal Addresses and Commission statements have all emphasized the combination of desire for change and the pragmatic difficulties involved in achieving the goal. The central question is whether the approach adopted is designed to expedite or delay achievement of the goal, or whether it is the most expeditious method within the stated concern of the Church to protect the interests of all concerned. Certainly there are many points at which the resolve of the Church to rid its life of segregation may be called into question.

To this writer it seems clear that the analysis thus far supports the preliminary conclusion that the history of the attitudes of the dominent whites toward Negroes, expressed most clearly in the movement from an antislavery position to anti-abolitionism, prior to the Separation and in the segregated structure of the Union, has had two major effects on the contemporary scene: It has limited the possible alternatives available, thus determining the actual course of action taken in the contemporary period, and, perhaps more important, it has permeated the thinking of the Church on the issue. The latter effect can be seen in the response of the annual conferences, bishops, and boards and agencies, to which we now turn.

PART II.

The Response of The Methodist Church to the Present Racial Crisis as Mediated through the Structure of the Church

CHAPTER V.

THE RESPONSE OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCES

The analysis of the manner in which the annual conferences have responded to the goal of inclusiveness in the Church and the racial crisis in the community is perhaps the most important part of our examination of the structure of Methodism. The importance of the annual conferences derives from their direct relation to the local life of the Church. As we have noted, The Methodist Church is a connectional body, divided into five regional jurisdictions and one racial jurisdiction that send representatives to the General Conference, the supreme legislative body. The jurisdictional system is a direct outgrowth of the conflict over the related issues of race and regional authority that played such a central role in negotiations leading to Union. The General Conference has played an extremely important role in determining Methodist policy on race and the major battles on the internal problem have taken place at General Conference. The two southern jurisdictions have utilized the authority given to them in the Constitution to maintain regional identification and to protect the social patterns of the area. However, the General Conference and the jurisdictional conferences meet only once in four years, at which time policies are established and programs approved. As a result, the responsibility for carrying out the policies and programs falls on the annual conferences and national boards and agencies. The boards and agencies are of central importance because they control and expend tremendous sums of money, publish and distribute hundreds of pieces of literature, and take prime responsibility for unified Methodist witness in every area. However, the boards and agencies are removed from real contact with the life of the Church at the local level.

Of all the structural levels in the Church, the annual conferences have the major responsibility for determining what happens at the local level. The annual conferences must ratify constitutional changes, they raise the money that supports Church programs, and they determine which policies and programs are going to be supported. In the Constitution of The Methodist Church, the annual conferences are referred to as the "fundamental bodies" in the Church.[1] The power of the annual conference must not be overstated, in that local churches retain a great deal of real autonomy, and a local church cannot be forced to support any program or policy with which it disagrees. But the local churches are tied to the conference by shared interests and programs and an extensive structure of conference agencies. Perhaps most important of all, the ministers are members of the annual conference rather than the local church. Their pastoral appointments are made within the conference, and the knowledge that their future is tied up with the conference and its churches insures their concern for conference interests. Furthermore, they are aware that, to some extent, their future appointments are dependent upon their continuing support and participation in the work of the conference.

---

[1] Discipline, op. cit., Par. 4.4 and 22.

The fact that the conference boundaries generally fall within one state, often including only one half of a state, is of vital importance to us in getting a full picture of the Methodist response to the racial crisis. The General Conference and boards and agencies reflect the national constituency of the Church and are neutralized to some extent by the competing regional interests. Without the inspection of the annual conferences, therefore, we would get a partial picture of the total Methodist response which would overlook some of the most significant actions taken. Also, we would not fully understand the great variety of response in the Church that becomes evident from comparisons of northern and southern conferences, on the one hand, and conferences within particular regional jurisdictions, on the other hand. These comparisons aid greatly in our understanding of the peculiar problems faced by The Methodist Church as a truly national body. Finally, many conferences initiate programs of their own. If we did not take account of such independent actions we would overlook one of the major sources of social thrust in the Church.

Our discussion of the Annual conferences will have two major divisions. (1) In 1965, I formulated a questionnaire to be sent to Chairmen of Conference Committees on Human Relations and Economic

Affairs.[2] By prior agreement, the questionnaire was sent out in conjunction with the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs of the national Board of Christian Social Concerns. This gave a slightly more official status to it. The questionnaire asked for a check-list response to eleven different kinds of problem areas related to race and tor some extended comment on number of people involved, money expended, duration of projects, and any assessment of results. About one third of the chairmen responded, but only about a third of those gave the extended comment requested in the second part. Thus, the questionnaire was only partially successful. Yet, it did provide enough information to structure a pattern in different regions. In addition, the responses indicated the types of action that would be supported and the types that would not. This is important to us in our appraisal of the understanding of the Church in its relation to social change. Analysis of the questionnaire will be our first task here.

(2) The second approach to the annual conferences will focus on eight conferences from different parts of the country. The eight conferences are: California-Arizona, (includes Los Angeles), North Alabama (includes Birmingham), North Georgia (includes Atlanta), Western North Carolina, New York East and New York (together they include New York City and have now combined), Detroit, and Rock River (includes Chicago). These conferences were selected to give a geographical spread, and

---

[2] Appendix A.

within their respective regions were chosen because there is a large city with a large Negro population. The exception to this pattern is Western North Carolina Conference, which was chosen as a representative conference of the middle or upper South. In every case where there is a large city there has been a history of racial violence or demonstrations, with the exception of Atlanta. The Western North Carolina, North Georgia, and North Alabama Conferences provide a contrast within the populous Southeastern Jurisdiction, and provide a good base for some discrete judgments about the Church in the South. By use of conference journals, we shall focus on trends within each conference in the last two decades as interest in the issue of race heightened, on comparisons between particular conferences within and across regional lines, and on particular aspects of individual conference responses that indicate the importance of the annual conference in the Methodist structure and further our understanding of the total Methodist response.

Before we embark on the analysis of the Questionnaire, comment about the intention of this chapter and the limitation on materials used is in order. In this chapter, we are attempting to describe and assess the response of The Methodist Church as mediated through the annual conferences. The Questionnaire and the annual conference journals provide an adequate basis upon which to make some tentative statements about types of responses supported, about distinctions among the annual conferences, and about the effects of cultural differences on the shape of the disparate responses. At the same time, it is essential to recognize that we are using only selected annual conferences and, in the case of the Questionnaire, reports that are suggestive in a general sense only. An exhaustive study of the annual conference level within the framework of a study of this type would require limitation of inquiry to a single conference. For our purposes, within the framework of an appraisal of the denomination, the broader perspective is preferable. However, we must guard against claiming too much for our findings, bearing in mind at all times that we are dealing with patterns which are suggestive only.

The Annual Conference Questionnaire

The questionnaire was sent out in April, 1965. In two months' time the last return had come back. Thirty questionnaires, or about one-third of the total sent, were returned. The geographical spread was quite satisfactory. There were eight responses from the Northeast, seven from the Southeast, two from the North Central, five from the South Central, five from the Western, and two from the Central Jurisdictions, and one from the Alaska Mission. The latter is not important to our study, but points up the complexity of the Church's relation to race. In Alaska, it was reported that Ketchitan, at least, was well integrated, with the white and Indian population mixed. The most disappointing jurisdictional response was the North Central.

The questionnaire asked the following question, "Have projects in race relations been carried out by local churches, Commissions on Christian Social Concerns, or the Conference Board of Christian Social

Concerns in the following problem areas." This was followed by eleven specific questions to which a yes or no response was to be given. A twelth response allowed specification of problem areas not listed. This will be discussed later. The eleven problem areas, followed by the total affirmative answers are listed directly below in Table A. Table B, which follows, contains the breakdown of response by jurisdictions. The numbers in the left hand column refer to the particular problem area. The numbers under the jurisdictions indicate the recorded affirmative and negative responses. (A/N) In most cases a blank would indicate a negative response, but it may also indicate a feeling that the particular item did not apply to the conference due to location and population make-up. In some cases a negative response was followed by an explanation that the particular problem, such as school integration, had already been resolved.

Table A

1.	Open Worship and Church Membership	20
2.	Open Employment (Appeals to Management and/or Labor)	15
3.	Open Housing Programs	16
4.	Reduction of Community Tensions, Community Education Programs, and any Follow-Up	20
5.	Improvement of the Standard of Schools in Ghetto Areas	10
6.	Efforts to Promote School Integration	12
7.	Exchange Programs with Central Jurisdiction Churches or Groups.	17
8.	Selective Use of Purchasing Funds to Promote Job Equality	3
9.	Support of the 1964 Civil Rights Bill	24
10.	Support of the Voter Registration Drive in the South	20
11.	Participation in or Support of Local Demonstrations	16

Table B

	N.E.	S.E.	N.C.	S.C.	West.	Cent.
1.	7/1	4/2	2/0	2/1	5/0	0/1
2.	4/3	3/3	2/0	2/1	4/0	0/1
3.	5/3	2/4	2/0	2/1	5/0	0/1
4.	5/3	6/0	2/0	4/0	4/1	1/1
5.	2/6	3/2	1/1	0/3	3/1	1/0
6.	4/4	4/2	1/1	0/3	3/1	1/1
7.	5/3	7/0	2/0	3/0	1/4	0/1
8.	1/6	0/5	0/2	0/3	2/2	0/1
9.	7/1	6/0	2/0	3/0	5/0	1/1
10.	6/2	4/0	2/0	2/1	4/0	2/0
11.	6/2	1/5	2/0	1/2	5/0	1/1

It is essential to state at the outset of our interpretation of the Questionnaires returned some of the limitations affecting our analysis. The returns are unsupported by any evidence that indicates the extent of involvement, the success of any program, or any of the problems encountered. Furthermore, a Conference Chairman, or a committee, might have given verbal support to a governmental program without any real assessment of the attitude of church members in the conference. There is no real basis to distinguish between affirmative responses that indicate investment of personnel and funds and those affirmative responses which are mere generalized feelings that a particular type of program is good.

However, the intent of the questionnaire was to get some kind of response as to what was being done and what was being supported across the United States. We do get a limited picture of what is being done. More important, analysis of the responses on the eleven items reveals the types of action that would be supported. This may serve as further evidence of the conception of the Church as to its proper function as an institution when confronting a social issue. Within this limited perspective, the following tentative comments may be made about the information submitted by the respondents:

(1) Only three conferences responded affirmatively to question eight regarding selective purchasing. This, of course, is one of the major areas of power and, as seen in the use of Federal funds to accomplish desegregation in the South, one of the most effective means to

bring about desegregation. Several Roman Catholic dioceses have recently undertaken a program designed to bring their extensive buying power to bear on suppliers and contractors, called Project Equality. The United Church of Christ has encouraged support of such a program, and in Detroit has joined in with the Catholic Church and is even using its literature. The Detroit Conference of The Methodist Church approved a selective buying at its meeting in June, 1965. In Connecticut, in 1966, all of the major denominational bodies, including the two Methodist conferences which share responsibility for Connecticut, have joined in support of Project Equality.

Many questions could be posed about the reasons behind the lack of widespread support for such programs among the responding conferences. Perhaps the major question is the extent to which this response indicates a conception of the Church and social action which considers such action inappropriate for church bodies. When the response on selective buying is coupled with the response to item two, concerning open employment appeals, the thought emerges that the form of action deemed appropriate to the church body is that of appeal but not that of direct action. This may, of course, be the proper response, but, if so, it indicates something of the thinking and something of the possible effectiveness of the church body as well.

The question about direct action by the Church as an organization looms larger when the responses to items one through four are compared to the responses to items five, six, and eight. The former received considerably more affirmative response than did the latter. Some action may be involved in any of the responses, but there is a striking difference between items one through four and five, six, and eight. In the first group, action is limited to appeals, education, or a change in the pattern affecting one's own behavior or that of one's group. In the second group, some assertive action is required that will impose directly upon the interests of others. This is an important distinction in kind, and the tentative conclusion may be made that The Methodist Church, as represented by the annual conferences, is reluctant to take that kind of action which involves a direct confrontation with others or challenges their interests.

(2) A second notable feature about the responses is the pattern presented by items nine, ten, and eleven taken together. The affirmative responses to these items dealing with different aspects of the current civil rights struggle decrease from twenty-four to twenty to sixteen. Almost all of the decrease, predictably enough, can be traced to the change in the response of the Southeast and South Central Jurisdictional Conferences. Perhaps three comments may be formulated from this pattern: (a) We may see here the regional differences that converge at the point of determination of action on behalf of the national body, tending to minimize or neutralize the response. The Methodist Church has not been willing to commit a large sum to the area of race through its national Board of Christian Social Concerns. Its response in this manner has been far less than that of other denominations. More important, its response in this manner has been less than that of some indivi-

dual conferences or other agencies of the Church, such as the Woman's Division of Christian Service. The different responses, North and South, in the Church among the conferences parallel the debate on some actions at General Conference. In both cases we see the operation of cultural differences. (b) The responses on these three items decreased as the type of program to be supported became more threatening. The regional difference is accentuated because the majority of demonstrations were occuring in the South. There is some evidence that those denominations which have committed vast sums of money to the civil rights struggle, most of which has been centered in the South until the past year, have not been noticeably successful in gaining support for programs designed to change patterns in the North, the source of much of the money. There have been some dramatic exceptions to this recently, but they have followed the "hot summer" of rioting of 1964. The Methodist conferences duplicate this regional pattern to some extent. However, as we shall see, the local strength of the conference system has resulted in some strong actions on the local scene by some conferences. This is one of the important assets of The Methodist Church, and it is essential to take note of it in assessing the total response of the Church. (c) There has been a great deal of attention focused on the subject of the church and social action in recent years. There is strong evidence to indicate that there are important regional differences in attitude about the proper role of churches in relation to social action, with stronger support evidenced in the North than in the South. That is to say, religion is viewed in a much more personal sense in the South than in the North. The consequence of this for the questionnaire responses is that the North-South differential may in part be explained by factors unrelated to attitudes on race.

(3) A third notable factor about the responses is the extent to which exchange programs with Central Jurisdiction churches or groups are reportedly occurring in the Southeastern and South Central Jurisdictions. This information must necessarily be qualified by the kind of resistance to integration of Central Jurisdiction conferences into the Southeastern Jurisdiction discussed in the analysis of the struggle over the Central Jurisdiction. Nevertheless, the positive responses to the questionnaire from the South have great significance. In the first place, one-half of the Central Jurisdiction members live in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, while there are vast areas in the North and West where there are virtually no Central Jurisdiction churches. Even in those areas where mergers have been consummated, as in the Northeastern Jurisdiction, there is no guarantee that this will be anything but a structural integration. James M. Dabbs and James Sellers, both southerners, have presented the thesis that the history of relations in the South between the races is such that the move from desegregation to integration may occur more rapidly, and significantly, than in the North.[3] They

---

[3] James M. Dabbs, address to Church History Club, Drew University, Spring, 1964. James Sellers, The South and Christian Ethics, (New York: Association Press, 1962).

readily admit the intransigence exhibited toward desegregation, but argue that in the North there is no real basis of prior contact between the races to support the move from desegregation to integration. By contrast, there is an extensive history of personal contact of whites and Negroes in the South. For our study, it is necessary to make the point that the affirmative response to item seven, on exchange programs, by the jurisdictions in the South is a hopeful sign that when step-two of the Plan of Action is taken the conferences may serve as a force to make the move toward inclusiveness effective.

It would be folly to exaggerate the importance of the response from southern conferences on exchange programs. Nevertheless it is worth noting in terms of future possibility. If the conferences are in fact the most effective organizational unit in the Methodist system, southern conferences will be an important resource for effecting inclusiveness. Later in this section we shall examine some important differences that exist among southern annual conferences. We must keep in mind the fact that the Southeastern Jurisdiction, representing leaders in the Church, has resisted attempts to move rapidly toward step-two of the Plan of Action. Finally, in Mississippi and Alabama there have been efforts by organized groups of laymen, with some ministerial support, to fight efforts toward integration in the Church. All of these factors qualify the significance of any exchange programs and put them in proper perspective.

In addition to the check-list, a number of respondents elaborated on particular items on the list or added additional items not listed. These responses are of utility for two purposes: (a) They indicate the breadth of actions being taken and, to some extent, the degree of involvement within a conference, and (b) they reflect the great disparity that exists in terms of understanding of proper actions, the different problems faced in different areas of the country, and the depth or intensity of the problem of even minimal involvement in particular locations.

Thus, the most complete response, which came from the New York Conference of the Northeastern Jurisdiction, reported a great variety of action, including, local human relations councils, a commission for hospital and home integration, voter registration efforts in the North, an open pulpit program, mutiple marches, school-boycotts, and support for the sit-ins and inter-racial appointment. In addition, a number of ministers joined the National Council of Churches' Commission on Religion and Race in the Delta Ministry Project and in the demonstrations in Selma, Alabama. Not all of these programs involved the conference, and there is little indication of duration, success, and funds expended. The report did point up the breadth of activities and the different organizational levels in the conference that were involved.

Other respondents mentioned particular programs that add to this list. On the West Coast there was considerable activity concerning open housing legislation. In California and in Seattle, the churches fought for open housing legislation, which lost in both cases. This may indicate something about the influence of the churches and something of the disparity between the position of ministers and laymen. The Western Pennsylvania Conference respondent reported support for adoption of Negro children by both races. There were a number of responses that indicated inter-faith activity, in which it is very difficult to assess the particular role of Methodists. Such activity may be effective in that it marshalls broad based support.

The reports of the type of activities listed above came from the North and West. Only two responses came from the Central Jurisdiction, one from the Georgia Conference and one from the Mississippi Conference. As the tabulation above showed, these two reports revealed very few affirmative responses. The Georgia Conference, for example, supported the voter registration drive in the South, but not the Civil Rights Bill or participation in local demonstrations. The Mississippi Conference, by contrast, supported all three of these items. Out of twenty-two possible affirmative responses, the two conferences had a total of only seven affirmative responses. Several comments may be made, although of a very tentative nature due to the meagre evidence available. One thing that seems apparent is that there is a great disparity between Negro leaders of the Central Jurisdiction and the leaders and members of some conferences. This disparity may be especially evident in the conferences of the Deep South, despite the fact that this is the area in which the problem in the Church is most intense. The history of relations between the races in the South may contribute to the reticence of older Negroes, who would hold leadership positions, to take assertive positions. The type of response given by these two conferences may be partially explained by the history of partial financial support by whites and the prevalence of church burnings where churches have taken a direct role in civil rights leadership. The response may also result in part from the contradictory goals of integration in the life of the Church at the local level at the same time that efforts are being made to wrest political and economic power from the whites. Desegregation and integration require different tactics, and one necessarily intensifies conflict between the racial groups while the other is designed to reduce tensions. It is impossible to pursue both goals at once.

The disparity between North and South is indicated by the type of programs supported and by the comments added by respondents. Whereas northern commentators were able to list as many as fifteen different programs and specify active participation in attempts to push legislation, no southern commentator submitted such information. Some comments were forthcoming, however, which demonstrate a difference in thinking and the obvious difference in regional patterns. The respondent from the Baltimore Conference, which had taken such a strong antislavery stand in the period leading up to the Separation, reported only three affirmative responses. He went on to point out that the institutional response is only one expression of Christian concern, and that individuals act as leaven in the society. He accepted the attack of critics on the Church for its lack of leadership. Here again we see the conflict in understanding about the proper role of the church in social action. This thought was accentuated by H. Travis Woodward of the North Georgia Conference. After giving affirmative responses for open worship and church membership on a limited basis, for integrated communities, and for exchange programs with Central Jurisdiction conferences and churches on a minimal basis, he went on to say,

> To be honest, I do not know the answers to the above other than the ones I have checked. We have not had any mass movements or projects, but we are moving in Georgia (particularly in Atlanta) toward full integration. Of course we are more than 100 years behind, but I have observed that there is something of a healthy attitude among our people. We have failed our people as leaders in not walking abreast with the Negro in the South, but perhaps we have helped create a climate and got good, sound men elected in key positions in our state government.[4]

This type of thought was further supported by a respondent from the North Mississippi Conference of the Southeastern Jurisdiction. He gave five affirmative responses, but added the comment that all of these represented quiet, small tasks performed by individuals, with the exception of an annual meeting with the conference board from the Upper Mississippi Conference of the Central Jurisdiction.

Finally, the type of problem faced in the South and the present social action that is at all possible is indicated in a comment from the respondent of the Missouri West Conference of the South Central Jurisdiction. He reported that in the previous year a church in Kansas City,

---

[4] The Rev. H. Travis Woodward, North Georgia Conference, Questionnaire Response, April, 1965.

Missouri, had hired a Negro organist, after some delay in which the matter was weighed. He said,

> While the decision was a costly one financially, it is proving to be an important one spiritually (or so it seems to me). This was not a "project" in the sense of having been staged for the sake of promoting the civil rights movement. But once the ethical confrontation happened, it did become an "issue"--to put it in mild form.[5]

The important point for us to note is that while this was considered an issue and an ethical confrontation in Kansas City, in New York and Detroit and Seattle the issues centered around pushing for legislation, participation in boycotts, and sending representatives to trouble spots. There is a difference in kind in the type of action possible, and there is a difference in the conception of social action.

Eight Selected Annual Conferences

As stated above, eight annual conferences, representative of different parts of the United States, have been chosen for analysis of the type of response manifested by the conferences to the current racial crisis.[6] The conferences selected are Southern California-Arizona, Rock River, Detroit, New York, New York East, Western North Carolina, North Georgia, and North Alabama.

---

[5] Eugene L. Lowry, Missouri West Conference, Questionnaire Response, April, 1965.

[6] The New York and New York East Conference combined in 1964. Consequently there are eight conferences to begin with, but seven at the conclusion.

As stated above, these conferences were selected to give a geographical spread and, within their respective regions, were chosen because there is a large city with a sizeable Negro population in every conference but one. The racial problem of the last two decades has not by any means been centered in large cities alone, but many of the events receiving national attention have occurred in the cities. The cities also provide a point of reference between the northern and southern conferences.

In Part I, we focused heavily on the historical background to the dispute over the Central Jurisdiction, which was analyzed in Chapter IV. In the present portion of our study the prime emphasis will be on the contemporary scene, although continual relation will be made to the historical inheritance. 1946 marks the beginning of a period in several ways. First, it was the opening of the post-war era. World War II brought many changes to this country, and not least among these was the change in the pattern of relations among the races. The transition was not by any means immediate nor easy, but 1946 saw the beginning of the consolidation by Negroes of some of the gains won in the wartime situation. The roots of most of the changes, of course, go back long before the War, but the War accelerated the pace of change. 1946 also marks a beginning of real concern on the part of the Churches in the United States for the plight of Negroes in American culture. In that year, the Federal Council of Churches issued a statement on race that became a pattern for similar statements by all of the major denominations in the ensuing years. There had been concern of the part of the churches for problems faced by Negroes for decades before 1946, but, in the main, the concern had been directed at protection of the Negroes from lynching and other forms of physical violence. Now, in 1946, the effort was begun to bring Negroes in America into full membership in the economic and political life of the country.

We have noted that the annual conferences are referred to as the basic or fundamental bodies in The Methodist Church in the Constitution. In this section we will scrutinize the response of the eight conferences during the period 1946 to 1965 to try and get a picture of the type and range of responses among the conferences. It is recognized, of course, that by centering on these conferences that we are dealing with only a small portion of the annual conferences. This limitation is offset to some extent by the questionnaire sent to all conferences. It is further offset by the selection of conferences from different geographical areas and by conferences located where there has been a high intensity of confrontation on the race issue.

On the basis of the analysis of the conference journals of the eight conferences, we shall attempt to summarize major types of action or responses supported, the disparity between the North and the South, the disparity within the North and within the South, the timing of the various responses, the trends within a conference, and the picture that emerges of involvement of the Church through the annual conference level in the national problem. In order to provide a basis for discussion of these items, we shall trace the responses of the selected conferences through the last two decades. As to be expected, in every case there is a growing awareness of the problems faced by Negroes and of the resistance to change that exists in our nation.

The annual conference journals contain a great deal of information about issues and actions under consideration, about positions supported by the conference through resolutions on particular problems, about programs that are to be supported, and about specific actions that have been taken. All of these are important in building a picture of the prevailing view within a conference on the way in which the church should respond to a particular problem. However, it must be kept in mind that there is a difference between actions in the form of programs voted or actions taken and resolutions. A resolution is essentially a statement of intention of support by the delegates to the annual conference, and they are not binding on members or churches within the conference. Thus, the resolutions are useful for gaining an appreciation of the thinking of conference leaders, but it is the actions taken that reveal more concretely where the conference is on a given issue at a particular time.

The period since World War II has been marked by a number of important events affecting relations between the races, but the Supreme Court decision on public schools in 1954 and the sit-ins of 1960 were two of the most crucial, and they mark turning points in the struggle of Negroes for full opportunity at all levels. Certainly there were predecessors of both, but the decision of the Court brought the attention of the country to focus on the issue, and the sit-ins marked the real emergence of Negro leadership in the civil rights campaign. Since our concern is with the response of the Church to the racial crisis in the United States, we shall discuss the response of the conferences in three periods, using the 1954 decision and the sit-ins as breaking points. The periods will be 1946 to 1954, 1955 to 1960, and 1961 to 1965. In our discussion we shall look closely at the pattern of events in the conferences in each period. Following that we shall lift up some of the outstanding events for further comment. We will then conclude this section by attempting to interpret the major trends and disparate responses.

1946-1954

During the first period, which concludes in the year of the Supreme Court's school decision, the majority of the conferences studied gave little attention to the problems faced by Negroes in the Church or in society. Minimal statements are found in most conferences, revealing the expected North-South differential, but the outstanding fact is that only two of the conferences, Detroit and Southern California-Arizona, gave any consistent attention to the issue. Although much of what appears in the journals of these two conferences is limited to general statements about the problem, there is ample material to set them apart from other conferences. We shall deal with these two conferences fully after summarizing what is found in the other conferences in this period.

One of the most striking findings concerns the Rock River Conference. In the past two or three years this conference, within which lies

Chicago, has become one of the most forthright and active conferences in the Church on the issue of race. However, in the 1946-1954 period, there was virtually no attempt to deal with race on the part of the conference. Partial explanation may be found in the fact that it was only in 1952 that Rock River formed a Board of Social and Economic Relations. Prior to that time social concerns were apparently either handled on an ad hoc basis or neglected altogether. In 1954, the year of the Supreme Court decision, the only mention or race was a brief reference to relations with the Lexington Conference of the Central Jurisdiction. Beyond these two brief references there is no indication of any concern or action on the part of the Conference.

The New York and New York East Conferences displayed some concern for the matter of segregation and discrimination of Negroes, but the concern was expressed in the main, in generalized statements containing neither specific problems nor suggested actions which might lead to solution. Thus, for example, the New York Conference, in 1948, called for an end to segregation in the armed forces and end to segregation in general in American life.[7] The following year it noted that, "The practice of segregation is becoming increasingly abhorrent to the Christian conscience.[8] From 1950 on, the New York Conference did display consistent concern with intra-Church segregation. Thus in 1950 it supported interracial churches, especially in transition areas,[9] strengthened this interest by calling for "real" interracial churches in the conference in 1951, while urging an end to the Central Jurisdiction,[10] and in 1953 commented favorably on admission of Negroes to the student nursing program at the Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn.[11] That same year it questioned the lack of Negroes in the salesroom of the Methodist Publishing House in New York despite assurances on hiring. Although these expressions of concern about certain aspects of life in the Church reflect awareness of interest, there is no indication of any special awareness of problems in the community or the Church's responsibility for them, and there are no firm suggestions for solving those problems in the Church that are mentioned. As in the case of the Rock River Conference, no mention is made of the 1954 school decision of the Supreme Court.

---

[7] Journal of the New York Conference, 1947, p. 612. (all annual conference journals are published by The Methodist Publishing House at one of its branches, although such reference is not always indicated. For simplicity, the reference to The Methodist Publishing House will be omitted from citations of individual conference journals in this chapter.)

The New York East Conference, which until merger with the New York Conference in 1964 shared jurisdiction over New York City, paralleled the New York Conference in neglecting completely any aspect of the issue of Negroes in life outside the Church. From 1946 to 1950, no mention is made of race, but from that date on there is growing concern for the problem in the Church. In broad-based statements in 1950, the Conference called for meetings of all jurisdictional conferences on an open basis, for the study of all policies of Church institutions, for the removal of the Central Jurisdiction, and an open hiring policy for all boards, institutions, and local churches of The Methodist Church.[12] In 1951, the New York East Conference took one of the most important actions of this early period when it called upon the General Conference to establish a Commission on Racial Brotherhood to work for the removal of all kinds of racial segregation in the Church.[13] Although the mandate of the commission that was appointed in 1956 to study the Jurisdictional structure was of a much more limited nature than that desired by the New York East Conference, that desire, transmitted to the General Conference in 1952, represents early pressure for change in the Church. In 1953 and 1954, the Conference expressed its support for a national fair employment practices law. In 1954, it did express "profound satisfaction" in the Supreme Court Decision, and in so doing became the only non-Southern conference in our selected group to take cognizance of the decision in that year.

---

[8] Journal of the New York Conference, 1949, p. 104.

[9] Journal of the New York Conference, 1950, p. 85.

[10] Journal of the New York Conference, 1951, p. 98.

[11] Journal of the New York Conference, 1953, p. 115.

Consideration of the three conferences in the South reveals the geographical segmentation in The Methodist Church. It reveals the wide differences existing in the South as well. In the nine years from 1946 to

---

[12] Journal of the New York East Conference, 1950, p. 604.

[13] Journal of the New York East Conference, 1951, p. 872.

1954, only two statements were made by the North Alabama Conference pertaining to race. The two statements demonstrate the nature of commitment of many southerners. It demonstrates as well the dilemma in which many southerners find themselves. In 1950, the North Alabama Conference adopted the following resolution,

> We furthermore declare for justice to all races, but we are committed to a policy of segregation in Church and Society. The Central Jurisdiction was set apart as a sacred agreement in the Plan of Union. We are committed to the perpetuation of the Central Jurisdiction as the best method of carrying on our Church with the 330,000 Negroes who are in it.[14]

In 1954, however, a resolution was passed concerning the Supreme Court decision which conflicted with the commitment to segregation. The resolution spoke about democracy and our form of government and commented on the fact that the decision of the Court will upset traditions and customs. It then concluded,

> Therefore, Be It Resolved by the North Alabama Conference in session at Birmingham, September 11th, 1954, that we not only call upon our people to obey the laws of our nation, state, county, and municipalities, in order that our democracy may live, but also to be prayerful and to show Christian patience as all of us work together for the good of all men.[15]

In these two resolutions we see the conflict between the commitment to segregation in Church and Society and the commitment to a government based on law. We are well aware of the successful resistance to school integration on any significant scale in Alabama in the twelve years since the Court decision. The degree of integration has been stepped up somewhat in the past two years through the use of the threat of withholding of Federal funds. The commitment to obey the law obviously was limited to working within the letter of the law. Avoidance and delay within the framework of the law was quite legitimate. Yet, minimal as the support has been, the fact is that the Conference publicly supported obedience to the decision of the Court despite the conflict with its stated commitment to segregation just four years earlier. It is quite interesting to note that the Court decision affected the attitude of the Conference only in so far as society was concerned. The Conference continued to reiterate its opposition to changes in the jurisdictional structure, particularly in relation to the Central Jurisdiction. Finally, we must note that in the 1950 statement, justice was not seen to be violated by segregation.

---

[14] *Journal of the North Alabama Conference*, *1950*, pp. 48-49.

[15] *Journal of the North Alabama Conference*, *1954*, pp. 60-61.

During the 1946-1954 period, the North Georgia Conference passed three resolutions on race relations. Each dealt with the maintenance of law and order. However, unlike the North Alabama Conference, the North Georgia Conference went beyond support of the law to condemnation of race prejudice and more important, to the recognition of the implications of Christian faith for human rights and justice. In 1947 the Conference spoke against the injection of race into political campaigns and against prejudice and race hatred as sources of lynching.[16] In 1949 they again passed a resolution on lynching and terrorism. The

---

[16] Journal of the North Georgia Conference, 1947, p. 111.

Conference declared that recent lynchings had brought shame and humiliation and condemned them along with masked parades, intimidation, and the use of the Cross as a symbol of terror. Finally, in 1954, the Conference spoke out on the Supreme Court decision. Of major interest to us is the fact that the Conference used the General Conference and the Supreme Court as authorities upon which it based its own call for law and order. The suggestions it put forth to help Methodists "reach conscientious and sound decision" reflect the legal and theological demands on churchmen and citizens.[17]

One of the most interesting revelations of the study of individual conferences is that the Western North Carolina Conference virtually ignored the whole issue of race during this entire nine year period. The only reference to race in the Conference Journals was the report of the collection taken on Race Relations Sunday which was used to support specific colleges for Negroes. The lack of comment on the issue is especially surprising in view of the strong statements that appear in the years immediately following. There was no reference to law and order, and no mention of the Supreme Court decision. One possible explanation is that the Conference Board of Social and Economic Relations was established in 1954. We see a very strong parallel here to the lack of comment of any kind in this early period in the Rock River Conference. It, too, did not have a Conference Board of Social and Economic Relations until late in the period.

---

[17] _Journal of the North Georgia Conference_, _1954_, p. 90.

As stated earlier, the Southern California-Arizona and Detroit Conferences displayed the most consistent concern with the issue of race in the 1946 and 1954 period, and they bear some detailed scrutiny. In the case of Southern California-Arizona, of course, the most pressing problem in the war years and immediately after was that of the Japanese-Americans who were located in camps during the War and relocated in California following the War. The journals seldom distinguish when using the term "race", and often use "minority groups" in place of race. Special mention is made of Negroes in recent years. We shall have to assume that the concern expressed in conference journals refers to Negroes as well as to Orientals and Mexican-Americans.

In the 1940's, the journal contains only general statements on the problems of the Church and race. In an early statement the assessment of the conference spokesman is that the Church is lagging on a major problem.[18] The issue was again before the Conference in 1948 when a report was adopted calling for the girding up of the Church on race. In the 1950's, there was a statement on race in each year. In 1950 in an interesting prelude to the kind of argument used in the 1954 Supreme Court school decision, the Conference spoke out against segregation and its effect on the young, despite educational opportunities. From this base it delivered a broad based call to ministers and laymen to insist on non-segregated churches, to discourage circumvention of the Supreme Court ruling on housing, and to promote equality in health, education and recreation. They also pinpointed two particular problems of the Church by appealing to the churches to stay in transition areas and by deploring segregation in some Methodist institutions.[19]

---

[18] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1946, pp. 162-4.

They reiterated their concern about churches and church-related institutions the following year. In order to determine what the actual situation was, they sent out questionnaires to Methodist institutions and found that minority groups were not well served. Also, in 1951, they displayed their first concern about discrimination in housing.[20] Apparently their curiosity had been satisfied by the questionnaire findings on Methodist institutions, because there is no further mention of this issue in succeeding years. The lack of explicit steps to terminate practices which they decried in Church-related institutions is important to note in itself. It is notable also in relation to a similar type of report in 1963. In that year, they cited grievances from Negroes in Los Angeles on education, law enforcement, housing and employment. They stated their support for strong action in each problem area, but they developed no program designed to cope with the problems. One of the consistent things that appears in conference journals which is represented by Southern California-Arizona in 1952 and 1963 is the total lack of any attempt to deal directly with specific problems cited. Thus, the responsibility and initiative for action is given over completely to other organizations or persons. This is an interesting point in terms of the assessment of the Church's conception of its proper role confronting social issues. We must recall again that the annual conferences are the basic organizational structure in the Church.

---

[19] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1950, pp. 152-3.

[20] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1951, pp. 159-161.

In 1952, and again in 1954, the Conference proposed some recommendations to deal with the general problem of prejudice and discrimination. These recommendations, however, are broad-ranged, all-inclusive suggestions and are not designed to solve specific problems. Thus, in 1952 the Conference suggested methods of education on the issue, called for the creation of favorable public opinion, recommended cooperation with other groups working in the area of human relations, and asked the churches to welcome members of all groups.[21] The suggestions in 1954 were again quite general in nature and support was given for various forms of cooperative ventures by community groups and for participation of ministers and laymen in human relations councils. Perhaps most important of all, the Conference recommended that the Church take the initiative by seeking out people of other races through the local churches and by using conference financial aid to support churches organized on an inter-racial basis. It called for open worship and open membership which is indicative of a problem in the churches at that time. Although the Conference voiced its opposition to segregation it would seem that segregation was a part of Church life in California.

---

[21] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1952, pp. 178-9.

Of the annual conferences selected for study, the Detroit Conference has displayed the most consistent and forthright concern about the problem of segregation and discrimination in Church and society. Although its position in the 1946-1954 period[22] is not particularly striking in comparison to what conferences have been doing and supporting in the past several years, its position in the immediate post-War period is notable in relation to what we have seen in the other conferences. Impetus was undoubtedly given to conference concern about race by the race riots in Detroit in 1943.

The early awareness and concern of the Detroit Conference about segregation and discrimination in the Church is represented by two actions taken in 1946. In the first, it recommended the appointment of a committee of nine to meet with a similar committee appointed by the Lexington

---

[22] Although our scrutiny begins in 1946, it is interesting to note that the Conference Journal of 1943 records the results of a poll on discrimination. On the general issue of discrimination in industry, housing, and the armed forces, 292 stated that it was wrong, 9 indicated that it was not wrong, and 15 recorded a "doubtful" response. Yet, when asked whether the Church should set an example by opening its hospitals, homes, restaurants, buildings, business enterprises, summer camps, conferences and churches, the responses shifted to 211 affirmative, 27 negative, and 78 doubtful. Although two-thirds of the respondents felt that the Church should take the lead, it is interesting that 81 of those who felt that the discrimination was wrong were unwilling to see the Church take the lead in fighting it. (Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1943, p. 741). Also notable is the fact that no mention was made of the riots in the 1943 Journal. This omission was deplored in the 1950 Journal.

Conference of the Central Jurisdiction in 1945 to check "the practicality and advisability of effecting the transfer to the Detroit Conference of the pastoral charges of the Lexington Conference."[23] Interest in such merger dates back at least to 1944.[24] In a second action, the Conference approved the following resolution, "We urge our World Service Commission to apply as rapidly as possible the following principle: that all institutions drawing World Service funds shall be open to all persons without drawing any racial distinctions whatsoever."[25] As we have noted previously, the General Conference has consistently refused to take any action that would result in the withholding of funds from Church agencies or institutions which do practice discrimination. Two decades after the Detroit resolution the most the Church has been willing to do is to authorize a study of its institutions. The General Conference of 1968 will have opportunity to act upon the study, but past treatment of any proposals for restrictive use of funds to thwart discrimination does not augur well for any new strong action in this area.

In 1949 they centered their concern in the area of race in full opportunity in social and public life, in politics and the use of economic resources. What is important for our consideration is that they went beyond the generalized statement of the problem to support various forms of legislation. They said that in order "to prove sincerity in their declarations," they would support federal and state legislation aimed at discrimination. At this time they specified President Truman's Civil Rights Program, A Federal Anti-Poll Tax Law, a Federal Anti-Lynch Law and a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission.[26] The Detroit Conference was one of the first conferences to give its support to specific legislation to counter segregation and discrimination. It is interesting to compare this type of response to that of the Southern California-Arizona Conference which noted general problems but stopped short of means of solution. The approach to racial problems through legislation is given consistent support by the Detroit Conference throughout the post-War period. One of its most consistent concerns in this area has been a Michigan Fair Employment Practices Law. It first deplored a lack of such a law in 1949 and continued to press for state action until passage of a law a number of years later.

---

[23] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1946, p. 578. (The Lexington Conf. overlaps 14 annual conferences of the regional jurisdictions).

[24] The interest in union at this early date is quite significant. Despite the stated interest, however, the Conference was still expressing concern about this problem as late as 1953. After that time the issue appears to have become a part of the larger concern about the whole debate surrounding the Central Jurisdiction.

[25] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1946, p. 579.

The Conference continued to express its interest in legislation and relations with the Lexington Conference in the 1950's. In 1953 it called for the elimination of the Central Jurisdiction at the earliest date possible. We noted earlier that the New York Conference had taken such a stand in 1941. The Detroit stand represented a growing sentiment in the Church for termination of the arrangement agreed upon in the Plan of Union. In 1953, the Conference also approved a policy calling on every local church to serve all persons, even when the population composition changes. That the adoption of the policy did not guarantee compliance is evident from the report in 1960 of a Conference survey of practices in the local churches.[27]

---

[26] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1949, p. 315.

The most significant factor that emerges from study of the journals of the Detroit Conference is that support was given for specific types of action both within the Church and society. Although an occasional specific suggestion appeared in other conference reports, no other conference journal contained so many instances of specific suggestions for change or stated support for programs directed toward change. Once we have noted this, we must go on to say that only in the case of merger with the local Central Jurisdiction churches did the Conference move beyond the resolution stage to the point of taking action such as appointing representatives or allocating funds. Thus, despite the early affirmation of change in the Church and society by the Detroit Conference, little firm action was taken until later.

The most notable fact about the conferences studied in the period between the end of World War II and the 1954 Supreme Court Decision on the schools is the minimal amount of attention given to the problem of race. In the Rock River and Western North Carolina Conferences virtually no mention was made of the problems confronting Church or society. In the New York and New York East Conferences, some concern was expressed about problems in the Church, but no attention was given to the ramifications of segregation and discrimination in society. The two conferences that did devote considerable attention to the problem were both the scene of recent major disturbances over race. In Detroit there were major riots in 1943. California was faced with the aftermath of the removal and incarceration of Japanese-Americans during the War.

---

[27] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1960, p. 112.

It is clear that for the most part, segregation and discrimination had not become a central problem for the annual conferences at this time. We may note further that in this early period the response that was made was most totally limited to vocal support for generalized programs of change or mere statement of major problems.

On the basis of what has been said, it is apparent that the conferences studied did not at this time have a deep appreciation of the problem the Church or society faced, nor did they have a sense of direct involvement in change where the problems were recognized. What is generally termed the "race problem" had been central in the nation since the early days of the century. It was accentuated in World War I and the depression, and it had come to particular focus during World War II. After the War, the government, the Federal Council of Churches, several denominations, and the General Conference had cited the gravity of the problem faced and the injustice of segregation and discrimination. Certainly the problem was not new, nor was it hidden. In the face of the growing urgency of the problem for at least three decades, it is remarkable that so little attention was given to it by the conferences. Since the conferences are the fundamental units of The Methodist Church through which action at the local level is structured and supported, it is quite apparent that at this time The Methodist Church was not playing a leadership role in meeting the problem as manifested in the society.

1955-1960

The 1954 Supreme Court decision on public schools and the Montgomery bus boycott two years later brought the whole issue of civil rights to center stage in the nation. In the Church, the General Conference approved the passage of Amendment IX, facilitating the transfer of churches and conferences of the Central Jurisdiction, and appointed the Commission of 70 to study the jurisdictional structure. In the light of the heightened awareness and activity in both Church and society, it is not surprising that we find more frequent mention of race relations in the Conference Journals in the 1955 to 1960 period. We are taking these years as a distinct unit because they follow the Court Decision which marks a turn in affairs and conclude with the sit-ins which in turn served to change the atmosphere of the confrontation on race.

In the conferences studied, some mention of race appears in almost every yearly journal. The only exceptions to this pattern, curiously enough, are three or four instances in which we find no mention of problems related to race in southern conferences in years when dramatic events were occuring in the South.

The most notable changes occurred in the Rock River and Western North Carolina Conferences, which had both ignored the race problem in prior years. In both cases, as mentioned before, Conference Boards of Social and Human Relations were formed near the end of 1946-1954 period. The ways in which these two conferences responded were quite distinct and perhaps somewhat surprising. Although the Rock River Conference dealt with race in each year of the 1955 to 1960 period, its concern was directed wholly within the Church. No mention was made of problems in the wider society, and certainly no attempt is made to use the Church as an agent of change or of reconciliation in the society. The silence on the whole area of what was occuring in Chicago at that time appears incredible today. This is especially the case in the light of the type of responses manifested by that conference in the last several years.

Of the intra-Church interest displayed by the Conference, the relation with the Lexington Conference of the Central Jurisdiction was the most important and received the greatest attention. The Rock River Conference was one of the first conferences to begin study and planning toward merger with Central Jurisdiction churches located within its boundaries, and it became one of the first to complete transfer arrangements. Furthermore the Conference has been instrumental in leading the North Central Jurisdiction to the successful completion of steps one and two of the "Plan of Action for Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction" as passed by the General Conference of 1964.[28] In 1956 a two page report dealing with inter-conference relations was inserted in the journal.[29] The following year, the Conference Board of Social and Economic Relations held a joint meeting with its counterpart from the Lexington Conference, and in 1959, an invitation was extended to the churches of the Lexington Conference within the bounds of the Rock River Conference to join it.

An action directed at another important area of the problem of segregation and discrimination in terms of the Church was contained in a resolution passed in 1958. In that resolution, the Conference urged "the publishing agencies of our church, particularly in the fields of Church-school literature and general periodicals, to make certain that they follow a policy of inclusiveness". Beyond that, they urged that "church publications use a variety of the opportunities available to them to demonstrate in print and picture that the inclusive way is a natural part of the Methodist way of worship and service and Christian living.[30] These resolutions were directed at a rather delicate point in that church publications are written for a national audience. The boards generally maintain that they do not make policy, but only carry out the policy established by the General Conference. Although the General Conference has stated often that it supports inclusiveness, it has not taken action designed to require institutions to serve on a non-segregated basis, and it has refused to terminate the Central Jurisdiction until those most directly affected voluntarily so desire. Thus, the editors of church literature have found themselves between opposing pressures.

---

[28] The Detroit Conference addressed itself to this matter nearly a decade earlier.

[29] Journal of the Rock River Conference, 1956, pp. 189-90.

[30] Journal of the Rock River Conference, 1958, pp. 189-190. A similar resolution was passed by the Southern California-Arizona Conference in the same year. Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1958, pp. 127-128.

In 1957, the Rock River Conference reported 12 churches integrated out of over 350 churches.[31] In 1958 it was recommended that a study of conference churches and institutions be undertaken, and the results were reported in 1959. The Journal of that year reports that 377 questionnaires were sent and twenty-six percent were returned. Of the 99 replies, 17 reported that they were unwilling to accept persons of other races, 15 reported that they were now interracial (race not specified), and the remainder recorded their willingness to accept people of other races. It is impossible to speculate about the status of attitude or practice in the 278 churches that did not respond. However, it is interesting to note that of those churches that did respond, slightly over seventeen percent stated that they were unwilling to accept people of other races. It is surprising, indeed, that such a high proportion of churches in a northern conference would make such a response even though they might not encourage open membership in practice.

The Western North Carolina Conference presents the most dramatic picture of change of any of the conferences studied. Prior to 1955, the only reference to the whole issue of race relations was to Race Relations Sunday and the collection taken at that time for Negro Colleges. In 1954 a Conference Board of Social and Economic Relations was established. Nothing appears on race in the 1955 Journal. Finally, in 1956, a statement is made that there is a need to recognize the race problem and undertake to meet responsibilities in this area. After this the Conference became increasingly concerned and assertive on the race issue.

---

[31] Journal of the Rock River Conference, 1957, p. 177.

In 1958, a resolution was passed asking the Board of Trustees of Duke University to restudy its restrictive admittance policy.[32] Four years later they commended Duke for changing its policy to one of admitting applicants without restriction as to race, creed, or national origin.[33] They also called attention to the renewed activity of the Ku Klux Klan, commented unfavorably on the Klan, and asked that it be exposed. They saw it as the Church's task to counter the publicity and following of the Klan.[34] Their concern about the Klan and their attack on it was to increase in the 1960's. These two stands in 1958 represent forthright, perhaps courageous, action in North Carolina. This becomes especially apparent in 1962 when an attack on hate groups notes that they are "heavily peopled" by Methodist laymen.[35] Certainly the stands taken in 1958 were not popular with many Methodists in North Carolina.

---

[32] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1958, p. 85.

[33] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1962, p. 83.

[34] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1958, p. 201.

[35] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1962, p. 161.

Despite any unpopularity or criticism that may have resulted from statements supporting inclusiveness in the Church and calling upon the churches for leadership, the Conference continued to approve strong statements formulated by the Conference Board of Social and Economic Relations. In 1959 and again in 1960 the Board put forth nearly identical statements calling on the Church to take a leadership role in race relations, and criticizing it for past hesitation. It is notable that in both instances the call for more positive leadership by the Church is based on the teachings of the Bible about the fathership of God and the brotherhood of man. There are very few occasions in which the conferences studied used theological bases for positions taken. The 1959 statement reads as follows,

> Your Board of Social and Economic Relations recognizes with gratitude all progress made in making more Christian our race relations. We commend all who have any part in it. But in this era of supersonic speed, we cannot but feel concern over the slowness with which we move in applying the teachings of the Bible that God is the father of all peoples and races; that all men are brothers; that man is of infinite value; and that all practices and institutions should be judged in the light of these truths. Here the Church has a message and a responsibility which it cannot relegate to courts, school boards, or to the secular press. Many who have listened in the past to the Church's message on brotherhood are now looking for leadership and support in difficult and epoch-making times.[36]

Notable also in 1960 is the report that the Conference Board of Social and Economic Relations of the Western North Carolina Conference held a joint meeting with its counterpart of the Central Jurisdiction Conference covering the same area.[37]

---

[36] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1959, p. 207.

[37] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1960, p. 228.

The statements of the Conference Board are notable for several reasons in addition to their theological framework. They cite the fact that the churches have lagged behind other institutions and state that in the area of race relations the Church has a responsibility that cannot be passed on to other institutions or organizations. This is especially notable in the light of the fact that the conferences have often been willing to support policies or actions of other groups, but have stopped short of initiating their own programs. The forthright Western North Carolina position was mitigated, however, by the fact that no firm proposals were forthcoming for specific types of action. In addition, these statements are of crucial importance to us in that they point out the very great disparity between conferences in the South. No such statements were to be found in the North Alabama Journals. Too often, in the Church, as in the secular press, the South has been seen as an undifferentiated mass. These statements reveal important differences, at least at the level of verbal commitment and acknowledgment. Finally, these statements are more demanding of the Church than are some of the positions taken in the northern conferences represented. In the latter there appeared on occasion a ready willingness to approve and follow the lead of the Court and, later, the student sit-ins. The Western North Carolina statements call for the Church to take the initiative.

The contrast between the Western North Carolina Conference and the North Alabama Conference is so great that we may benefit from consideration of the latter next. Of the six possible years in this period in which some statement of understanding or report of actions taken might have been made, four are without any comment on the issue of race at all. Of particular interest to us, no comment is made from 1956 to 1958, the period of the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott and its aftermath. Certainly that incident represents the first instance of initiative by Negro leaders and marks the emergence of what we may call the civil rights movement.[38] The boycott itself could have been ignored. The fact that the Conference Journal contains no reference to it is indicative of the attitude of delegates concerning the proper role of the Church in social affairs. Another possible interpretation is that the interests and attitudes of Methodists were so firmly tied to the position taken by governmental officials that it was not felt necessary to reiterate a known position. That this interpretation is not completely far fetched becomes evident when we inspect a statement approved by the Conference in 1959, in which the long held custom of segregation in Church and society is upheld. In addition to the silence on the Montgomery bus boycott, the Conference made no comment at all on the sit-ins which began in early 1960. These two instances, taken together, are rather striking indication of a lack of involvement of the Church in that area in problems arising out of the growing encounter between the races. When considered over against the statements of the Western North Carolina Conference, it appears that the North Alabama Conference was quite content to let other forces in the society take the lead on the issue of race.

---

[38] Technically, the movement for civil rights for Negroes had its beginning at least as early as the late eighteenth century. The NAACP, the first of the modern organizations to be formed, began over fifty years ago. Yet, what we today call the civil rights movement is distinguished from previous efforts by pressure outside the courts, and it may be dated with the assertion of economic power in the Montgomery bus boycott.

The contrast between the two conferences, and the disparity in the South, becomes even more apparent when we consider the two statements made by the North Alabama Conference during this period. In 1955 the Conference adopted a long resolution defending the jurisdictional system which became a memorial to the 1956 General Conference. The resolution said, in part,

> The Central Jurisdictional System is a part of the jurisditional plan. We must frankly face the fact that it is based, not on geographical, but on racial lines. Yet, the entire Church should ever keep these two important historical factors in mind; First, the jurisdictional plan, including the Central Jurisdictional System, made Union possible. Without it there could have been no united Methodism. Secondly, the three great branches of Methodism entered into and accepted the plan of Union in all good faith. It was a marvelous triumph of the spirit of goodwill and of Christian understanding over all divisive barriers and deep-seated bitterness of the past. We do not plead for a static society, nor for the permanent preservation of conditions as they are. Change must ever be a part of progress. But any effort on the part of our brethern of other sections to alter the basic structure of the Church constitutes a breach of faith. And what is more serious, it would do irreparable harm to the Church, and if pressed might even lead to a tragic schism-- a divided Methodism.
>
> It is generally recognized that in the jurisdictional system our Negro brethern have a representation on the boards of the church, in the General Conference, and in the Council of Bishops out of proportion to their numerical strength. Instead of being discriminated against they have been favored in this respect. To quote again from the statement made by the College of Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, 'It is evident to us that the Central Jurisdictional System has afforded our Negro membership opportunities and privileges they have not hitherto enjoyed. On account of it they have been called to places of leadership and have been accorded large representation in the councils of the

> Church. The abolition of the Central Jurisdictional System would reduce our Negro membership to a small minority scattered over five jurisdictions, with less participation in the Church's life and program. This, in our judgment, would not be progress.'[39]

No citation is given for the quotation from the College of Bishops of the Central Jurisdiction, but it is true that Negro leaders have on occasion defended the Central Jurisdiction because of the protections and representation it offered to the Negro minority in the Church. However, by the time of the 1955 North Alabama Conference, most Central Jurisdiction spokesmen were already speaking out against the Central Jurisdiction in strong terms. In 1952 Central Jurisdiction Conference Journal, the bishops take a tack quite opposite to the position cited in the North Alabama statement.

The quoted statement contains several notable features. First, of course, is the reminder that Union depended on the segregation of Negroes into the Central Jurisdiction coupled with the implied threat that change could lead to schism. Second, it is interesting to read that they do not plead for permanence and that change as a part of progress is fully recognized, and then to read that any change in the "basic structure of the Church constitutes a breach of faith." Finally, the argument that the jurisdictional structure has favored Negroes in terms of representation in the hierarchy of the Church touches on one of the most difficult problems encountered in attempts to dissolve the Central Jurisdiction. Some Negro spokesmen have been unwilling to see the Central

---

[39] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1955, pp. 63-65.

Jurisdiction dissolved without any protections for positions held. The Committee of Seventy and the Committee of Thirty-Six cited this problem as a major barrier to dissolution. Only recently have Central Jurisdiction spokesmen uniformly declared that they are entirely prepared to take the risks involved in the attainment of complete inclusiveness. We have already noted, however, that the willingness to give up national guaranteed representation has been coupled with demands for equal participation at the conference level. It is the latter which is the current stumbling block to merger.

In the 1959 North Alabama Conference they again spoke out on the Central Jurisdiction and memorialized the General Conference to the effect that no change should be made in the jurisdictional system. In the memorial, they cited the geographical segmentation of the Methodist Church and the resulting differences in deeply engrained social customs and patterns. They argued strongly for a large measure of local option and regional freedom.[40]

> Finally, it must not be forgotten that the inclusion of the jurisdictional structure in the plan of the Union, including the Central Jurisdiction, made Union possible, and to change the Jurisdictional System, or to gradually weaken it and make it non-operative by a series of modifications will jeopardize the Union of the Church.
>
> We hereby register our conviction that in a church as large as ours, covering as it does the entire nation and having represented its various geographical segments differences in population composition, in traditions, and in long standing and deeply engrained social customs and patterns, and with other problems peculiar to each section, there must be allowed a large measure of local option and regional freedom. . . .[40]

---

[40] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1959, pp. 169-170.

In a long resolution on the jurisdictional system, the argument was put forth that, "The Jurisdictional system was created so that racial and sectional groups might be united in world redemption and yet work in their chosen patterns on the local level. Under the Jurisdictional System these social patterns cannot be changed without the will of a two-thirds majority of the people involved."[41]

The views expressed by the Conference in the memorial and the resolution present some of the most difficult problems faced by the Church. The Church has consistently supported the concept of voluntarism and, thus, local option. Amendment IX is based wholly on this principle. Yet, the Church is committed to inclusiveness and the Judicial Council has ruled that inclusiveness is a connectional matter,[42] which means that the General Conference may pass legislation on inclusiveness as long as the Constitution is not violated. There is a clear conflict here and the result will depend upon later interpretation of General Conference action. A further problem is presented by the fact that the Negro annual conferences voted against the plan of Union and thus are not working in their "chosen patterns". Thus the will of a majority is being imposed on a reluctant minority on an issue in which the Church is committed to the side of the minority in principle and the majority in present legislation. The problems inherent in the Central

---

[41] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1959, p. 162.

[42] Concern, January 1-15, 1966.

Jurisdiction dispute have been discussed at length elsewhere in this work. The major concern of the North Alabama Conference in the 1955-1960 period, however, was devoted to this issue.

One further stand taken by the North Alabama Conference needs to be cited. In 1959, The Methodist Church held a Human Relations Conference in Dallas, and certain positions were ratified and some "action principles" formulated. The North Alabama Conference interpreted the work of the Dallas Conference as a threat to their traditional pattern of race relations in the Church and in the society. Consequently they adopted the following resolution,

> Resolution
>
> CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RELATIONS
>
> WHEREAS, A Conference on Human Relations was recently held in Dallas, Texas; and
>
> WHEREAS, According to newspaper reports said Conference adopted certain so-called "action principles" concerning the abolition of segregation in house, school and churches; and
>
> WHEREAS, Said "action principles" do not conform to our way of life, and are in fact, diametrically opposed to our customs and usages concerning these matters; and
>
> WHEREAS, we approve the Jurisdictional System of the Methodist Church, and wholeheartedly oppose any effort toward its dissolution;
>
> NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the North Alabama Conference of the Methodist Church in annual session on September 9, 1959, that the Conference on Human Relations in no way speaks the sentiments, opinions and feeling of the Conference.
>
> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the reported actions and recommendations as contained in said "action principles" are hereby expressly disavowed;
>
> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any action toward the abolition of the Central Jurisdiction, or any weakening or alteration of the present Jurisdictional System is strenuously opposed;
>
> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Conference expresses its opposition to anything which tends to break down our long esta-

> blished custom of segregation of the races in schools, churches, and housing accomodations.[43]

The portion dealing with the jurisdictional system merely ratifies what we have already discussed. The final paragraph, however, reiterates the commitment of the Conference to segregation in the society made in 1950.[44]

Again, the comparison of the position of the North Alabama Conference with that of the Western North Carolina Conference is instructive. While the latter conference was calling for the Church to clean up its own house and take a leadership role in the society, the former was reiterating support for a system of segregation in both Church and society. The latter used theological grounding to formulate its call for reappraisal and assertion of the Church's role in the struggle for inclusiveness. The former used the political structure of the Church as its main defense of a system that protected its social custom. In these two conferences, both from the South, we see most clearly the disparity in thinking which exists in the Church.

The North Georgia Conference stands both geographically and ideologically between the North Alabama and the Western North Carolina Conferences in the 1955-1960 period. In 1955, like the North Alabama Conference, it approved a memorial to the General Conference calling for no change in the jurisdictional system.[45] In the following years, however, it took note of race relations problems and posited some general statements in terms of Christian brotherhood. In so doing it took a position quite distinctive from that of North Alabama. The statements, however, fall far short of those of the Western North Carolina Conference in terms of the seriousness of the problem cited and in terms of the role the Church should play.

---

[43] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1959, p. 163.

[44] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1950, pp. 48-49.

Thus, in 1956, after an expression of hope for "sound findings" by the Commission of 70, the race situation was summed up by the statement, "Great strides have been made in the progress of race relations within the bounds of our conference. We call for a calm, reasonable and constructive approach to these problems as they present themselves."[46] Nothing is said about the nature of the problems, nor what the conference, as The Methodist Church in that area, has done or should do. In the following year, after noting that "Christian Brotherhood is basic to our religion," the report recommended study classes on a community level, commended the women's groups who have held inter-racial study groups, asked local churches to cooperate with these groups in their study of "Christ, Church and Race," suggested that channels of communication for consideration of the problem be kept open, and called upon ministers and laymen to seek proper avenues for meetings on the issue.[47] The recommendations are cited here because they demonstrate that concern was expressed as well as the inadequacy and lack of specificity in the suggestions made. Apparently the only firm action that had been taken was on the part of the women who participated in the inter-racial study groups.[48] The role of organized Methodist women will be examined more fully later.

---

[45] Journal of the North Georgia Conference, 1955, p. 109.

[46] Journal of the North Georgia Conference, 1956, pp. 88

[47] Journal of the North Georgia Conference, 1957, p. 81.

One of the strongest criticisms which must be levied against the conferences as fundamental units of the Methodist Church is that too often their concern on specific issues has been limited to statements of a problem coupled with generalized suggestions to study or work for change. The North Georgia Conference does not stand alone on this by any means, but its response during these years well represents this type of generalized response which fails to wholly grasp a problem and, furthermore, fails to specify actions adequate to deal with the problem. The treatment of race in 1958 illustrates well this central problem of the Church's role in the conflict over race relations. A statement of brotherhood was preceded by a call to use the power of the pulpit to bring pressure to bear on creating public sentiment in favor of enforcing the laws, and a recommendation to support sufferage for every man and woman of legal voting age. The brotherhood statement itself reads,

> Concerning Brotherhood: We believe that it is Christian to sustain kind, understanding, and cooperative relations between all peoples who have the mind of Christ for the building of His

---

[48] Journal of the North Georgia Conference, 1958, pp. 81-82.

> Kingdom, and for the preservation of Christian civilization; therefore, we pray for harmonious relations among all races and all creeds. Men everywhere have souls, but only under God is the spirit of man lifted to its potential greatness. Man achieves his highest heritage only as his destiny is guided by the brave and stubborn will of Him who holds the movements of time in His scarred but steady hands.[49]

The report continued with a number of recommendations on a variety of matters from UNICEF and trick or treat at Halloween to Temperance, but no suggestion is made on how the Church might play a role in establishing the brotherhood it upholds. This lack of specificity is widespread in annual conference responses, and it is one of the points at which the Church is most vulnerable to criticism about its efforts to obtain its stated goal.

As we move to consideration of the remaining conferences, we shall find much more reference to specific problem areas, such as housing, employment, and appointment of ministers on a non-racial basis. There concerns will widen our appreciation of the breadth of understanding of the problems related to race on the part of the conferences. However, only in the case of the Detroit Conference will we find something particularly distinctive in terms of basic understanding of the involvement of the Church. Thus we may consider the Southern California-Arizona and the two New York conferences together at this point.

Each of the three conferences named made reference to the problem of race relations in every year from 1955 to 1960. Each conference specified a number of problems related to race in the Church and society. In almost every case, however, the reference was very general, limited to citing the problem or suggesting that something be done about it. Thus, the Southern California-Arizona Conference discussed problems such as open schools and called for bettering relations in 1955, called on the churches to take the lead in the community on race as related to schools, business houses, factories and neighborhoods the following year,[50] urged that more inclusiveness be demonstrated in Methodist periodicals in pictures and curriculum in 1958[51] and again in 1960,[52] and supported open housing and employment in 1959.[53] The concern for housing was to become an ever increasing one for the Conference as it became a central political issue in California. The most distinctive action taken by the Southern California-Arizona Conference regarding race in this period was a survey of the churches in 1956.[54] The survey demonstrated an expressed willingness to have open churches and to participate in opening other areas of community life, but also indicated little openness or involvement in practice. The following year the Conference called on the churches to examine themselves. There was apparently no effort to discover why there was a disparity between expression and practice, or, more important, to develop a plan whereby practice might come into closer union with expressed verbal willingness. Again we see the inadequacy of the conferences in the inability or unwillingness to move from citation of a problem to specified programs of action designed to bring about change.

---

[49] Journal of the North Georgia Conference, 1958, pp. 81-82.

---

[50] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1956, pp. 216-217.

[51] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1958, p. 129.

[52] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1960, p. 149.

[53] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1959, p. 139.

[54] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1957, pp. 216-217.

The picture presented by the New York and New York East Conferences was not much different. In 1955, the New York Conference distributed "The Methodist Church and Race," a reprint of a statement in the 1952 Discipline[55] and took a stand against segregation in The Methodist Church.[56] The next year it commended the state Commission Against Discrimination and supported progress in racial integration with the following statement,

> (We) recognize that the process is complicated and arduous. For that reason we endorse the President's stand on moderation, and trust that the church will serve as a catalytic agent in the process of integration and assimilation. We believe that the Supreme Court decision should be implemented with the practice of brotherhood within the church, and not only its preachments.[57]

No attempt was made to indicate in what ways the Church might serve as a catalytic agent, nor how the church might implement the practice of brotherhood. In 1957 the report recommended that the Conference extend invitations to the two Central Jurisdiction churches within its bounds to join it. They also commended the Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn for progress in admitting nursing candidates on a non-racial basis, but called for a similar policy for staff physicians. Finally, they deplored the continued policy of the New York Book Store of the Methodist Publishing House of limiting employment of Negroes to menials.[58] They received a letter in response saying that they had neglected to look into the facts before speaking, and that eleven of sixty-nine non menial jobs were held by Negroes. These jobs were apparently in non-retail positions, however.

---

[55] Journal of the New York Conference, 1955, p. 143.

[56] Ibid., p. 147.

[57] Journal of the New York Conference, 1959, p. 101.

The 1958 report adopted by the Conference is another example of the lack of specificity in terms of the problem and possible types of involvement that so characterizes the responses of the conferences. In that report, they commended the Supreme Court for its school desegregation decision and expressed humiliation that large segments of the people have refused to accept it, commended President Eisenhower for his Little Rock action, commended all the "unseen heroes in the country working for the brotherhood of man," and recommended that Methodists of the Conference continue to find every avenue for improvement in their own communities, especially in housing and recreation. When assessing the leadership role of the Church in society on this issue, it is difficult to avoid concluding that it is completely lacking when its actions are limited to expressions of good feeling for past actions by other bodies or persons and one sentence reminders to members to keep up the good fight.

---

[58] Journal of the New York Conference, 1959, p. 101.

In 1959 and 1960, the Conference directed its attention to two specific problems in the Church and expressed its concern over discrimination in housing, stating its support for legislation in the latter area. As far as the Church was concerned, it cited a major problem by expressing concern about the Church leaving transitional areas.[59] The Conference stated that the Church was not moving as fast as society and called for the abolition of the Central Jurisdiction.[60] It also requested the Northeast Jurisdiction to invite all annual conferences of the Central Jurisdiction in its bounds to join it.[61] One crucial problem involved in any such transfer was referred to in a request to the college of bishops of the Northeastern Jurisdiction "to do everything in their power to equalize the appointment possibilities so that pastors are sent on the basis of ability." This latter point touches on one of the central problems involved in mergers. Appointment on an equal basis is one of the guarantees being sought by the Central Jurisdiction leadership as part of all merger agreements.

Although the New York East Conference, like other conferences, failed to specify remedies for problems cited, its journals do contain some material that requires comment. In 1955, the Conference adopted the following interesting statement on its indebtedness to the Supreme Court for its school decision,

---

[59] _Ibid._, p. 146.

[60] _Journal of the New York Conference_, _1960_, pp. 101-102.

[61] _Ibid._, p. 111.

> We rejoice that the Supreme Court has added another chapter to the Emancipation Proclamation by its unanimous decision outlawing segregation in the public schools. We feel that the finger of God is pointed at the church by this decision, which reveals our own tardiness in accepting all men as our brothers in faith and fellowship and fact.[62]

To rectify matters, they proposed the following changes for different levels of the Church. For the local church, they suggested trying to get more than token interracial fellowship and trying to establish extended pastor exchanges with the Delaware Conference. For the annual conference, they merely suggested reaffirming the traditional stand that all are welcome. They became more explicit when dealing with the national level of the Church, however, when they said the following,

> We call attention to the fact that segregation of eating, drinking and comfort facilities and discrimination in hiring policies exist in the Methodist Publishing House, The Parthenon Press, and the Abingdon-Cokesbury press in Nashville, Tennessee. Believing that these departments of our church should represent the policy of and be responsible to the entire Methodist Church, rather than to local customs, and that Methodism has spoken clearly on this issue, and that experience demonstrates little or no strife when those in authority take firm steps to end such practices, we urge that all forms of segregation be discontinued in these establishments before the General Conference of 1956.[63]

Finally, they suggested that the Social Creed of the Church, which reads, "We stand for the rights of racial groups, and insist that the above social, economic, and spiritual principles apply to all races alike," be changed by adding, "Inasmuch as segregation carries with it an inherent inequality, we renounce segregation in all areas of society, especially in the Church of Jesus Christ."[64]

---

[62] Journal of the New York East Conference, 1955, pp. 103-104.

[63] Ibid., pp. 103-104.

Other than the specific reference to Methodist agencies whose practice is not seen to correspond to the principles of the Church, the suggestions for action outlined are not worth particular note. What is important in the material cited is that the debt to the Court is so clearly noted. Not only is the decision of the Court seen to be a judgment on the tardiness of the Church, but the reasoning of the decision is judged to be so valuable that the conference wants it incorporated in the Social Creed of the Church. It is quite interesting that an agency of the Church must turn to the Supreme Court, which in turn relied on the social sciences, to discover that "segregation carries with it an inherent inequality." In addition to the influence of the Court seen here, we must again note, as do the framers of the adopted report, that the Church had not taken a leadership role on the issue of race at that time.

In 1956, the Conference expressed its concern about a variety of matters related to the Central Jurisdiction, and suggested approval of several measures designed to facilitate understanding and eventual merger.[65] Of particular note was the recommendation to go on record to accept bishops, district superintendents, and pastors irrespective of race or national background. They also recommended approval of Amendment IX despite reservations they had about it. The latter is of interest in relation to a previous discussion in which it was noted that once a suggested procedure becomes Church policy it is defended as such and becomes very difficult to change. Their approval with reservations is interesting in terms of their report in 1958.

---

[64] _Ibid._, pp. 103-104.

[65] _Journal of the New York East Conference_, _1956_, p. 398.

In 1958, the New York East Conference adopted a long statement to the Commission of 70 in which it countered the breach of faith argument by rehearsing its understanding of what was involved in approving the Plan of Union. It argued that it was known at the 1936 General Conference that many delegates did not consider the Central Jurisdiction to be a permanent arrangement. Furthermore, when the Conference approved the Plan of Union, it included a resolution to the effect that the New York East Conference desired change later. Further, it maintained that other conferences took the same action which was all widely publicized before the Church, South, voted. Thus, in its view there was, "Fair notice that this issue would not be closed with the adoption of the Plan." The Conference then went on to call for the abolition of the whole jurisdictional system.[66]

This statement is interesting in that it represents again how far apart thinking in the Church was on the purpose and permanence of the

---

[66] Journal of the New York East Conference, 1958, pp. 1003-1004.

Central Jurisdiction.[67] This illustrates a certain naivete on the part of northern delegates who saw the Central Jurisdiction as a necessary, temporary expedient without anticipating the constitutional difficulties they would later encounter. The South stated before and after the Union that the jurisdictional system, and, especially, the Central Jurisdiction were necessary requisites to Union. The descrepancy in thought over what occurred in 1939 is apparent from comparison of the New York East and North Alabama positions.

Three other specific items supported by the New York East Conference need to be cited. In 1957, the adopted report was devoted to the problem of segregated housing in the North. The Conference advocated combatting it by legislative support, self-education on the part of the churches, and attempts to change patterns where discrimination existed, perhaps by encouraging increased housing available to middle and low income persons.[68] In 1960 the suggestion was made that trustees should "examine the opportunities for Christian witness in bond issues for such things as integrated housing and church extension."[69] This is the only mention of the use of financial power on the part of the conferences studied until 1964. As such, it is especially notable in that the use of financial power is recognized to have great potential in changing patterns. Beyond that, it is important for the Church in that heavy expenditures are made through purchases and investments. It would be quite interesting to know to what extent Church funds are invested or expended in firms that discriminate in hiring or extension of services. Finally, in 1960, the Conference supported the sit-in movement and approved of non-violent means for elimination of injustice. It was the only conference studied to give such support in the year in which the sit-ins began.[70]

---

[67] We have already noted that the North Alabama and North Georgia Conferences expressed their opposition to any change in the jurisdictional system. We cited the statement of the North Alabama Conference in which attempts to change the structure of the Church now would be considered a breach of faith.

[68] Journal of the New York East Conference, 1957.

[69] Journal of the New York East Conference, 1960, p. 96.

Throughout the discussion of the conferences, continual comment has been made on the lack of action by the conferences designed to help solve a particular problem cited. Too often, solution has been left in the hands of other agencies if it has been considered at all. The only exception to this pattern has been an occasional conference survey of attitudes and practices. Such surveys, unfortunately, were not followed up with any firm action geared to utilize the information gathered. Certainly, on the basis of what we have seen thus far, it is quite legitimate to draw the conclusion that the conferences did not consider their proper roles to be that of active participants in the struggle over race relations. On several occasions, as we have noted, conferences did express the hope that the Church would take the lead. But, these statements, coupled with the lack of specified programs of action, represent either a misunderstanding of how change occurs or an unwillingness to move from the realm of statements to the field of activity.

---

[70] Ibid., p. 96.

The Detroit Conference presents an exception to the pattern discerned in all of the other conferences studied. To be sure, by today's standards, the kinds of actions undertaken by the Detroit Conference in the 1955-1960 period appear to be rather minimal and of limited effect. By comparison to other conferences at that time, however, the response of the Detroit Conference was quite unique and represents a significant difference in understanding of conference involvement in the area of race relations.

In 1955, the Conference merely continued expression of general interest in areas noted previously, such as the local church being open to all, the desire to continue negotiations with the Lexington Conference, the affirmation of the Supreme Court Decision and the Council of Bishops' support of that decision, and its consistent support for local, state, and national Fair Employment Practices legislation.[72] In 1956 the Conference affirmed a statement by its Council for Social Education and Action that declared, in part, "The most critical domestic problem confronting the United States today is in the area of race relations." The statement went on to commend Martin Luther King and supported his nonviolent approach.[74]

---

[72] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1955, p. 913.

[73] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1956, p. 104.

[74] Ibid., p. 105.

This stated support by the Detroit Conference is especially interesting in the light of the absence of any comment by the North Alabama Conference at this time. No particular action was proposed in 1956, but apparently the statement about the most critical problem was taken seriously, because in each year after that in this period the conference engaged in some form of action that required specified action and financial support.

Thus, in 1957, the Conference participated in an Interracial Leadership Conference which was termed, "the most effective and thorough exploration Methodists in this area have ever made in the field of race relations."[75] In the following year, the Conference held the First Interracial Youth Conference, with 120 in attendance. These conferences were held consecutively for at least seven years. In 1959, the Conference Board responsible for social concerns worked with twelve churches as pilot projects for the adoption of an Open Occupancy Covenant by the Official Board. Discussions were held and attempts made to persuade support for the Covenant program. In 1960 the Conference undertook a survey of practices related to race in the churches of the Conference. The reported results were not overly encouraging, but it did provide a basis from which to proceed. Thus in 29 out of 98 churches responding, the Women's Society of Christian Service had signed a Charter on Racial Policies distributed to Women's Societies in all of the churches.[76]

---

[75] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1957, p. 383.

[76] This Charter is now included in The Discipline.

Twenty-seven churches indicated that they would "consider" an open occupancy statement, and fourteen would "consider" having a Negro minister.[77] These figures indicate that many of the churches in the Detroit Conference were not any more committed to integration than was the North Alabama Conference. Segregated housing and schools in the North have come under sharper focus recently in the northern conferences.

We must be careful not to make too much of the actions taken by the Detroit Conference during these years. It is well known that people who attend interracial conferences are generally already committed to integration and have not come to be persuaded. Furthermore, special conferences often have no procedures or apparatus established to ensure that there are followup efforts by delegates to spread, or put into action, what they have learned. On the basis of the survey report in 1960, the pilot project in housing in 1959 did not bear a great deal of fruit in the short run. Unfortunately, if the lack of further comment in succeeding journals is conclusive evidence, the project was not pursued further.

Despite the limitations that must be made about the type of actions undertaken, it is still significant for our study that this conference, alone among all the others inspected, even made the variety of attempts indicated through conference agencies. Here, at least, the annual conference, the fundamental unit in The Methodist Church, was attempting to utilize its structure to create an atmosphere in which the Methodist goal of inclusiveness might become more widely accepted.

---

[77] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1960, p. 112.

In addition to the specific actions mentioned, the Conference continued to support the use of passive resistance,[78] open housing, and it supported broadened state laws on civil rights,[79] and fair employment practices laws.[80] In a unique combination in 1960, it supported sit-in demonstrations and commended police forces which have prevented chaos.

The period from 1955 to 1960 was marked by a heightened interest in race relations throughout the conferences selected for study. Two conferences, the Rock River and Western North Carolina, gave their first recognition to the problem during this period. The period was notable for statements on general issues unaccompanied by supporting programs designed to meet the stated problems. With the exception of the Detroit Conference, there was virtually no expenditure of funds by the conferences on race relations problems. Lack of funds means that no persons can be specifically hired to work on cited problems, and conference members who are assigned to work on issues must pay their own expenses. The Central Jurisdiction dispute came more clearly to focus with the expected sectional differences appearing. The situation in the South was marked by great disparities among the selected conferences. The complete lack of comment by two of the southern conferences on dramatic events related to race relations in that area requires more adequate explanation than can be given on the basis of the silent journals.

---

[78] _Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1957_, pp. 386-387.

[79] _Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1958_, p. 664.

[80] _Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1960_, p. 109.

1961-1965

As the Supreme Court school decision marked the end of one period, so the sit-ins marked the end of a second, and we move now to the third period, from 1961 to 1965, in which the tempo of conference concern and involvement increases.

The period from 1961 to 1965 was one of great activity in the area of civil rights in the nation. The sit-ins really marked the beginning of the period in which widespread popular support was gained for the civil rights movement. Mass demonstrations were held across the South, and Martin Luther King, Jr. and James Meredith became national figures. The March on Washington was held and important civil rights legislation was passed by Congress in 1964 and 1965. During this period, the Churches became highly active in the movement for civil rights. The United Presbyterians U. S. A. and the United Church of Christ formed special, well-financed denominational commissions on race and the National Council of Churches established a Commission on Religion and Race that participated in various phases of the civil rights movement as it gained momentum. As would be expected, the annual conference journals reflect the changing situation and mood in the country.

From 1961 to 1963, interests developed in the 1955-1960 period were continued, and there was only one instance of a dramatic change in the pattern of conference response to race relations problems. By 1963, however, race began to receive more attention from the conferences, and in 1964 and 1965 the problem becomes a central concern for every conference. In these last two years, in some conferences, we see a definite break in the pattern of responses limited to generalized statements about problems. Finally, funds and money are committed, and the conferences begin to play an active part in the effort to gain equal rights in their own locale and in the nation. In one or two instances, we see striking examples of the possible use of annual conference power through the use of conference funds.

One of the most dramatic changes in any of the conferences occurred in the North Alabama Conference. The change did not occur suddenly, nor did it represent a complete reversal of position. Certainly there was not a commitment of men and money to civil rights. Indeed, since Alabama was the scene of much controversy and national attention over race, the conference opposed the efforts of outsiders, some of them Methodists sent by other conferences, to change the pattern of race relations in the state. Moreover, some of the crucial events in the struggle over civil rights which occurred in Birmingham during this time, such as the demonstrations, the arrest of Martin Luther King in 1963, and the bombing of the Negro Church in Birmingham, go unmentioned in the journals. However, there was a cumulative change in attitude during these years that finally resulted in verbal support for the Church's position on race, and, perhaps more important, a recognition that lack of involvement on the part of the Church in the past is at least partially responsible for the existing situation today.

In the 1961 North Alabama Conference Journal, two statements on race were published. One was a general statement calling for freedom of all men and recognizing the "obligation to work for equal opportunities and justice for all." The only action suggested was holding discussions with other interested people and agencies to stimulate thought and action.[81] The call for equal opportunities and justice does not represent a commitment to integration, but, coupled with another statement in the Journal, it may indicate a move away from the previously stated commitment to segregation.[82] The second statement was a portion of some comments made by Bishop Nolan B. Harmon to the 1961 North Alabama Conference. Bishop Harmon spoke out against mob violence and appeals to prejudice that incited violence, and he also spoke out forcefully against outsiders who, by "inflamatory grandstanding" set race relations back in Alabama. The thrust of Bishop Harmon's remarks was that time and goodwill were the requisites for solution of problems. Within that framework, however, a paragraph was contained which indicates the kind of change in thinking that was occuring in the conference. Bishop Harmon said, "We have not dealt fairly with the Negro in the South, my brethern. God knows we have not. I speak as a Mississippian, born and bred in that sister state. We do long for justice and peace between man and man. . ."[83] He went ahead immediately to reject force and outside pressure and saw change occurring only through the "slow, slow, slow process of time". We must be careful, therefore, not to make too much of the quoted passage. However, it does appear to signal a change in thinking in that area represented by later statements in the journals.

---

[81] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1961, p. 104.

[82] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1950, pp. 48-49, and Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1959, p. 163.

[83] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1961, p. 63.

The statement in 1962 does not add much, but in 1963, the report of the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs adopted by the Conference called attention to the position of the General Conference on race and encouraged communication with those of other races, "especially Methodists in the Central Jurisdiction".

> It is gratifying to see an informed, moderate, Christian approach towards race relations growing in our state. The statement appealing to reason and goodwill signed by religious leaders of Alabama, including Bishops Harmon and Hardin, is a positive step toward the solution of a sensitive problem. Many others have spoken out on handling our problems in an atmosphere of freedom and goodwill, and in a way that will maintain our education institutions.
>
> Every Methodist should be aware of the position of the General Conference on race; should seek communication with those of other races, especially Methodist in the Central Jurisdiction should be tolerant of those with a different outlook; and should examine his own attitudes to be sure they are Christian.
>
> We seek to work toward greater opportunities for all the people of the state to secure jobs, housing and education. We oppose great centralization of economic power and exploitation in any form. We encourage informed action from every Methodist in helping to make standards of Christianity a reality in the areas in which we live.[84]

We are aware that the General Conference had strongly supported voluntarism and Amendment IX as advocated by the Commission of 70. The action of the General Conference on race certainly did not threaten Church or society in Alabama. Nevertheless, the statement indicates a slight movement away from the strong opposition, previously expressed, to any tampering with the jurisdictional system. In 1964 the General Conference received hundreds of memorials calling for the preservation of the jurisdictional system in tact, many of which came from Alabama. Undoubtedly, even a mild statement would come under fire by some members of the Church in that state.

---

[84] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1963, p. 158.

In 1964, the Conference passed two resolutions and adopted a report that demonstrate further the change that was taking place. First, they adopted a resolution to invite fraternal delegates from the Central Alabama Conference of the Central Jurisdiction to the 1965 conference, and to have boards and agencies invite certain clerical personnel to meet with them during the year.[85] We must note that the resolution was withdrawn the following year on the grounds that such action was the bishop's prerogative. The mere passage of the resolution in 1964, however, represents a movement away from the previously stated commitment to segregation in the Church. A second adopted resolution declared that the conference must cease from all discrimination and injustices among ministers and laymen.[86] In perhaps the most important statement of all, recognition is given to the fact that the Church had not fulfilled its responsibility in the past. The statement from the report of the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs reads,

---

[85] _Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1964_, p. 92.

[86] _Ibid._, p. 121.

> Better racial understanding is sorely needed in these times. Not even a good beginning has been made in the matters of communication between the races. This understanding is not only encouraged by The Methodist Church, but in keeping with common sense. If the church had taken more responsibility at this point, some of the worst incidents and clashes might have been avoided. Support of Race Relations Sunday in February is a positive step we should take. A moral, biblical and Christian position should be given priority over the merely practical, though the latter cannot be ignored.[87]

We must note, of course, that the statement is woefully inadequate in terms of suggestions of measures to ensure that the Church would now take responsibility. The single suggestion, the support of Race Relations Sunday, is related to the financial support of Negro colleges through a yearly offering and does not touch on involvement or responsibility in the racial confrontation taking place at that time in Alabama. Nevertheless, the three statements together represent a modest change in thinking in the Conference.

We may appreciate how limited the change that we have noted has been in its effect on practices in the Church when we consider an action taken in 1965. In that year, by a vote of 315 to 229, the Conference deleted the following statement from the report of the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs,

> Remembering that each local congregation is a representative of the one universal church, we therefore affirm that the doors of all Methodist Churches are open to worshippers of all races.

---

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 121.

> Each local church needs to consider its own responsibility in this light.

In place of that passage, the Conference substituted the following,

> We believe that the Methodist preachers and the local congregations of the North Alabama Conference are making sincere efforts toward a Christlike reconciliation in the sensitive area of race relations; we, therefore, reaffirm our dedication to be more prayerful for each other and for people of other races, and that we humbly request the prayers of all Christians of all races that God's will 'shall be done on earth as it is in heaven'.[88]

Clearly, resolved to rid the Church in Alabama of segregation had not become the dominant attitude at this time. The Conference did go on, however, to commend those Conference institutions which accepted persons without regard to race.[89] Finally, the Conference adopted a Pastoral Letter from Bishop Goodson as the official view of the annual conference. The statement acknowledged their sin and guilt in relations with others, called for commitment to the task of reconciliation, and proceded to say,

> We now speak because we must, in order to be faithful to the commands of the Gospel. Realizing God's love for us and His compassion for the human family, we are moved to express our desire to be a part of the redemptive process that will help to create in Alabama a climate of mutual respect and concern for human dignity. Therefore, we affirm the Christian faith. We commit ourselves to the elimination of those injustices that bar any of our people from full participation in all the rights of citizenship.
>
> We support the right to vote, and urge the fair administration of voter requirements for all of our people. We call upon people of good will of all races to join us in extending avenues of

---

[88] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1965, pp. 96-97.

[89] Ibid., p. 137

> communication and understanding. We feel that no person should be denied the right of participating fully in all the rites, opportunities and responsibilities offered by a free society. We pray that God will guide us as we move forward in a continuing program of reconciliation.
>
> Walter Kenneth Goodson, Resident Bishop
> The Birmingham Area of The Methodist Church[90]

In assessing the response of the North Alabama Conference in the 1961 to 1965 period to the racial crises so pronounced in that state, we would have to note that there were no reported actions taken or programs developed to counter the problems recognized. Further, we would have to note the hesitant nature of some of the statements and the unwillingness of the Conference even to call upon the churches to open their doors to worshippers of all races. In comparison to any of the other conferences in our study, the response of the North Alabama Conference suffers when judged against the stated Methodist goals of an inclusive Church in an inclusive society. Nonetheless, the positions taken by the conference during this period do represent a definite movement away from the positions taken earlier. We must also recognize that among the areas here inspected, the greatest pressures against change exist in Alabama.

The Western North Carolina Conference, which had made some forthright statements in the 1955-1960 period, continued to issue statements citing particular problems, commending specific actions, and supporting efforts toward improved relations across jurisdictional lines in order to carry out the mandate of the General Conference under Amendment

---

[90] Journal of the North Alabama Conference, 1965, pp. 137-8.

IX. Thus, the 1961 report suggested a variety of bi-racial meetings designed to prepare a base for eventual merger.[91]

Some mention of jurisdictional relations was made in nearly every year following. Joint meetings of conference boards, women's societies, ministers' groups, etc. received high priority among suggested activities. Finally, in 1965, they invited the overlapping Central Jurisdictional Conference to join, but noted the two-step procedure.[92] That conditions in the Conference did not yet match the progressive statements made through the years is indicated by the report of "Evidences of Improved Human Relations" in 1963. The evidences included "an increase in areas of the Conference where courses in Christian Social Concern are desired in training schools sponsored by the Board of Education," the fact that the Methodist Student Movement met at Lake Junaluska Assembly and "The trustees permitted unrestricted use of all facilities, including the swimming pool," and the citation of two churches which permitted use of their facilities for open meetings of the Methodist Student Movement.[93]

In addition to these rather routine matters, however, the Conference continued to speak out in a rather forthright manner on issues related to race on which there was considerable disagreement. Thus, in

---

[91] *Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1961*, p. 158.

[92] *Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1965*, p. 79.

[93] *Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1963*, p. 172.

1962, the report of the conference Board of Social Concerns, adopted by the Conference had this to say about hate groups and Methodists who were members therein,

> The Committee continues to feel much concern about the fact that numerous of the hate groups operating in our country are heavily peopled by Methodist laymen who are camouflaging strong segregation stands under the guise of group action that is supposedly dedicated to patriotism. We implore our church leaders to expose these groups in every way, and to appeal to our laymen for rejection of membership in such groups.
>
> In order to further promote equality of all men in the social and economic structure, we urge our churches to re-examine their attitudes towards media that should apply in non-discriminated fashion to all citizens, viz., transportation, housing, eating places, employment practices, voting rights, and others. This will become the only method by which discrimination on obviously superficial basis will be ended.[94]

The same report touched on a very important aspect of conference action when it stated that strong Conference support for "ministers and laymen who approach the matters of race relations in a courageous and intelligent manner, would be conducive to a more inclusive and determined effort in our churches and communities."[95] Unfortunately, no resolutions or measures were introduced to gain such Conference support.

In 1963, the Conference approved a resolution commending "peaceful, non violent efforts to abolish discrimination and segregation with regard to race, color or creed..."[96] The following year they affirmed that the action of several Duke professors in demonstrations was in accord with the 1963 resolution,[97] and reaffirmed their position on demonstrations in 1965.[98] They again spoke out on the hate organizations in 1965, and specified the Ku Klux Klan as "a hate organization that has no place in our modern society." Apparently laymen and ministers were Klan members, for the resolution continued, "We ask all members of our Conference to refrain from joining, and we feel that a Methodist minister is out of place serving a chaplain to any hate group."[99]

---

[94] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1962, p. 83.

[95] Ibid., p. 83.

[96] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1963, p. 97.

We have already noted that a series of bi-racial meetings were proposed. In 1965, note was made of a number of activities that had been held across jurisdictional lines, generally related to special schools or worship services. Despite the forthright stands on race which we have noted, these bi-racial meetings between Methodists constituted the only actions taken by the Conference until 1963. In that year, the Human Relations Commission of the Christian Social Action Commission launched a drive to raise $10,000 a year for three years to employ a Director of Christian Social Action to the North Carolina Council of Churches.[100] The 1964 Journal reports that he had been hired and that three-fourths of his time would be devoted to race. This commitment of funds adds substance to the statements made by the Conference.[101]

---

[97] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1964, p. 179.

[98] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1965, p. 178.

[99] Ibid., p. 85.

[100] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1963, p. 177.

[101] Journal of the Western North Carolina Conference, 1964, p. 179.

We have compared the Western North Carolina Conference and North Alabama Conference before. We may again note the wide descrepancy between these two conferences of the Southeastern Jurisdiction. The North Alabama Conference did, as we noted, make some hesitant steps toward recognizing that the Church had not fulfilled its responsibilities in race and did move away from the total commitment to segregation. This is quite minimal, however, when compared to denunciation of the Ku Klux Klan, support for non-violent demonstrations, and the expenditure of funds to hire a worker who would spend the majority of his time in the area of race.

The North Georgia Conference continued during this period to take a position somewhere between that of North Alabama and Western North Carolina. The apparent effort to take a middle ground position resulted in some confusion and contradiction. Thus, in 1961, the Conference appeared to support the Church's position on inclusiveness when they cited affirmatively the following passage from the Social Creed of The Methodist Church,

> The Methodist Church must view the perplexing times and problems which we face today in the light of the teachings of Jesus. Jesus taught us to love our neighbors and seek justice for them. To be silent in the face of need, injustice, and exploitation is to deny Him.
>
> We stand for the equal rights of racial, cultural and religious groups and insist that the social, economic, and spiritual principles set forth in this creed apply to all alike. The right to choose a home, enter a school, secure employment, to vote, or join a church should not be limited by a person's race, culture or religion.

> We stand for the right of all individuals and groups to advocate any peaceful and constitutional method for the solution of problems that may confront society.[102]

Notable in that passage is the affirmation of the right to choose a home, enter a school, secure employment, vote, or join a church without limitation due to race, culture or religion. In addition, the report cited the action of the Conference in 1954 when it supported the Court and called for compliance with the decision.

Yet, in 1962, the Conference adopted a proposal dealing with inclusiveness in the church which included the caveat that "there is nothing in this Report which advocates any change in the present structure of our jurisdictional system." The thrust of the proposal thus appears to preclude any significant inclusiveness among Negro and white Methodists who share the same geographical area. The statement, which is in conflict with the passage from the Social Creed quoted in 1961, reads as follows,

> That our churches seek to achieve an awareness among our people that the Church of the Jurisdictional Conference of which Methodism is a vital part, is an inclusive church. We call upon every member of the church to become an informed person with regard to the organizational structure of the Methodist Church, noting whatever elements of strength or weakness may adhere in our jurisdictional system; looking toward the action of the General Conference of 1964, and praying that whatever is done will promote the Kingdom of Christ and be for the spiritual enrichment of all the people concerned. However, there is nothing in this Report which advocates any change in the present structure of our jurisdictional system.[103]

---

[102] _Journal of the North Georgia Conference_, _1961_, p. 85.

[103] _Journal of the North Georgia Conference_, _1962_, p. 88.

To add to the confusion, after specifying that no change in the jurisdictional system was advocated, the report recommends "seeking ways of getting to know our fellow Methodists of other races on district and local levels, through the planning of joint meetings of conferences, pastor's schools, and educational assemblies."

The Conference also encouraged work for greater voter registration in the community, although race was not mentioned, requested that all facilities at Lake Junaluska be opened to all persons regardless of race, and commended the Board of Trustees of Emory University for its decision to admit students of any race as soon as legal obstacles were cleared.[104] Clearly, the Conference appeared willing to support measures geared to increase interracial contact at various levels in the Church and in society. At the same time, it retained its consistent position against change in the jurisdictional structure. The most likely of several possible interpretations of this internal contradiction is that it represents the existence of strongly divided opinion between important groups in the Conference.

In 1963 and 1964, the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs limited its comments on race to expressions of support for the activities of the Georgia Council on Human Relations. In both years, Conference representatives attended the National Conference on Human Relations, and in 1964 conferences on Human Relations were held across the state. No report on content or follow-up programs was made. The most notable item in these two years was an address delivered to the Conference by the Chairman of the Division on Human Relations and Economic Affairs. In that address, given as part of an observation of the emancipation proclamation, he noted that the Conference had often given verbal support for the position of the Church on inclusiveness, and went on to say that what was needed now was action rather than the reiteration of a stand. However, the only suggestion put forth was for each local church to project "a definite program of prayer and study."[105] Thus, during these years when interest and involvement in matters dealing with race were increasing across the country, the North Georgia Conference did no more than cite the problem.

---

[104] Ibid., pp. 88-89.

By the end of the 1961 to 1965 period, the Conference had come to the position of accepting the eventual termination of the Central Jurisdiction, although it was not supporting the move with any enthusiasm. Its recommendations on this matter in 1965 were, "That the existing church structures, including the local church Commission on Christian Social Concerns, the Official Board and other organizations use the 1964 Discipline and other resources in helping all members understand the proposed movement toward the abolition of the Central Jurisdiction. We believe an informed laity is imperative," and "That each local church establish and maintain communication with persons in the Central Jurisdiction in whatever way possible".[106] It was recommended that churches be open to all persons and that voter registration for all qualified persons be supported. No recommendations were made involving any commitment of funds of personnel to work for change in the area of race relations.

---

[105] Journal of the North Georgia Conference, 1964, pp. 106-107.

When we move to consideration of conferences in the northern and western jurisdictions, we get a much stronger demonstration of the rapid increase in concern and commitment to the problem of race as the tempo increased in the entire nation. In each of these conferences, some distinctive action is undertaken that breaks the pattern of statements only. The kind of action and the depth of the involvement varies, however, and only when we have considered all of these conferences do we get a total picture of the type of involvement possible at the conference level.

The Southern California-Arizona Conference illustrates well the change in response in the latter half of this period. For example, in 1962, before the change, they spoke of the Methodist Quadrennial Program on Race, and to combat prejudice and discrimination suggested personal confrontation with the facts, transforming the Church into an inclusive body, throwing personal influence into the struggle against discrimination, and "learning and practicing those methods of action which are most effective in securing these goals."[107] Admirable as these suggestions are, they are severly limited in effectiveness by the lack of any specific suggestions or programs designed to carry them out. The only hard recommendation was for the holding of training conferences. In another similar resolution, dealing with the Church, the Conference passed a resolution, "that our Conference move forward to create the Christian atmosphere whereby the racial barrier can be removed and thus make it possible for the Bishop and Cabinet to make appointments regardless of race".[108]

---

[106] Journal of the North Georgia Conference, 1965, p. 107.

[107] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1962, p. 159.

In 1963, the Conference "cited grievances" from Negroes in Los Angeles on a wide range of problems including education, law enforcement, housing, and employment, and "supported strong action" in each problem area.[109] However, no effort was made to develop any programs through which Conference agencies and personnel might attempt to alleviate or resolve problems cited. This complete lack of action becomes especially important in our assessment of the role of the Church through the annual conference structure when we couple the citation of problems in 1963 with the Watts riots of 1965. The riots might not have been prevented by any measures the Conference could have taken. However, the fact that the problems were considered by the Conference raises questions about what might have been done if it had undertaken a constructive program of action in conjunction with other denominations, civil rights organizations, and governmental agencies.

---

[108] Ibid., p. 160.

[109] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1963, p. 171.

The major shift in the approach of the Southern-California Conference came over the issue of housing. At least as early as 1951, the Conference had displayed concern over segregation in housing and had repeated this concern often. In 1964, California voters were faced with a proposed constitutional amendment designed to abolish fair housing legislation and prohibit its passage in the future. Proposition 14, as it was called, posed such a threat to the struggle for inclusiveness in that state that large forces were mobilized on both sides of the issue. All of the major denominations in California joined forces with civil rights organizations and citizens committed to an inclusive society to defeat passage of Proposition 14. Denominational leaders spoke out forthrightly against the proposed amendment, and large numbers of ministers and laymen joined in the effort to defeat it. The Church clearly moved from the arena of statements to the field of active participation in a crucial political battle.

Despite all efforts to defeat Proposition 14, it passed in the November elections. Much support had been given to it in an advertising campaign aimed at the protection of the right of property owners to dispose of their property as they desired. Many voters found a real dilemma between the argument for non-discrimination put forth by opponents of the amendment and the traditional view that a man's home is his castle. There was considerable confusion over what a yes or a no vote would mean in the way in which the proposed amendment was stated. For whatever reasons, the amendment passed. However, it was declared unconstitutional by the California Supreme Court in 1965.

What is important for our consideration is the position taken by the Southern California-Arizona Conference. In a strong resolution on Proposition 14, the conference said the following,

> Whereas the Christian must recognize the sinful nature of racial and religious segregation and must acknowledge that the prevailing patterns of racial segregation inflict grievous harm upon all society and particularly upon members of minority groups, and,
>
> Whereas, we believe that all considerations of property rights must be guided by a primary concern for human dignity and justice, and that the personal right to buy or rent without racial or religious discrimination must take precedence over the personal right to sell or lease with such discrimination.....
>
> THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Southern California-Arizona Annual Conference of The Methodist Church declare its opposition to the constitutional amendment against fair housing legislation and other regulations, which appear on the November 1964 ballot, and which if passed, will permanently prohibit the right of states, counties, or municipalities to legislate further in the field of fair housing;[110]

They went beyond the statement of opposition to the amendment to issue a call to the churches and members of the Conference to work for the defeat of the constitutional amendment and to give financial support to "Californians for Fair Housing". Although the resolutions did not contain any measures to structure action, they did apparently serve as initiative for many ministers and members of the Conference to become directly involved.

The 1965 Conference session was held after passage of Proposition 14, and prior to the Court's decision that it was unconstitutional. The Conference took cognizance of the defeat, but it proposed a variety of measures by which Methodists could continue to fight for open housing.

---

[110] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1964, pp. 67-68.

> The struggle over Proposition 14 threw into sharp focus the evils of a segregated society which is a direct result of segregated housing.
>
> Many Methodists for the first time sensed their obligation to give leadership and direction to end this insult to democracy and Christianity and were moved to heroic efforts to defeat anti-fair housing legislation. Passage of Proposition 14, imposes on us an ever clearer obligation to witness in this crucial revolution of our time. We urge Methodists to stand up and be counted; to participate in all meaningful activity that will increase communication and understanding; to buy homes in integrated areas; to work for total open occupancy; to insist that brokers and leading institutions have equal opportunity policies for lending so that all qualified buyers can be adequately financed; to reaffirm our support of meaningful housing legislation as a means of eradicating age-old evils and educating current society in its responsibility to its fellow men.[111]

In addition to the action on housing, the Conference demonstrated by one other resolution in 1964 its willingness to move beyond statement of problems. It passed a resolution on fair employment which reads as follows,

> A Fair Employment Practices Agreement is required in all construction contracts entered into by churches and/or church-related institutions of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, provided that quota systems, formal or informal, do not discriminate against competent workmen and that trustees of the various churches and institutions prudently handle the funds under their control in the most economical manner possible as part of the Christian stewardship.[112]

Although there are qualifications within the statement that throw into question the effectiveness of the resolution, its adoption indicates willingness to use the economic power of the Church to obtain the stated goal of inclusiveness. We shall see more dramatic examples of this type of action when we consider the Rock River and Detroit Conferences.

---

[111] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1965, p. 155

[112] Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1964, p. 69.

The two New York Conferences in our study merged in 1964, and we shall consider them together. During the first three years of the period both conferences continued their patterns of major concern for the situation in the Church. One chief exception to this pattern was an expressed interest in housing.[113] In the New York East Conference this interest was supported through the endorsement of an open occupancy covenant which was urged upon the Conference.[114] The Concern for housing was also expressed by the New York East Conference in 1962 when it approved a proposal calling for, "The placement of conference and local church funds in those banks which have a non-discriminatory loan policy, with special reference to race. Thereby trustees, both of the conference and of the local churches, would be reflecting our concern that minority groups be able to secure housing."[115] No indication is given in later journals as to how successfully this policy was pursued.

Both conferences expressed themselves forthrightly on problems related to race facing the Church. The New York Conference requested its district superintendents to "ascertain from every Quarterly Conference held the willingness of the churches under their jurisdiction to accept a

---

[113] Journal of the New York Conference, 1962, p. 110

[114] Journal of the New York East Conference, 1963, pp. 1037-1039.

[115] Journal of the New York East Conference, 1962, p. 746.

Negro as pastor if appointed."[116] This request was reported in 1963, but no information was published indicating what, if anything, was discovered. The New York East Conference shared this concern, and sent a memorial to the General Conference calling for the endorsement of the principle of appointments on the basis of ability only.[117] Also, both conferences called for the dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction by 1968.[118] To facilitate such dissolution, the New York Conference attempted to assure members of the Delaware Conference that rights, privileges and representation would be protected and that leadership opportunity would be available.[119] The New York East Conference called for an invitation to the Delaware, Washington and North Carolina Conferences of the Central Jurisdiction to join the Northeastern Jurisdiction.[120] The invitation was made, but it was vetoed by the Central Jurisdiction which took a firm stand against transfers that crossed boundaries of the geographically defined jurisdictions.

The New York and New York East Conferences merged in 1964, the year in which the churches of the nation became thoroughly committed to participation in the Civil rights movement. The Journal of the united

---

[116] Journal of the New York Conference, 1962, p. 113.

[117] Journal of the New York East Conference, 1963, pp. 1114-1115.

[118] Ibid., p. 1113. and Journal of the New York Conference, 1963, p. 122.

[119] Journal of the New York Conference, 1962, p. 113.

[120] Journal of the New York Conference, 1961, p. 471.

Conference reveals the increased commitment through the recital of particular forms of involvement or participation by Conference members and representatives and by recommendations for future action. The Human relations Division of the Conference Board of Christian Social Concerns created a special sub-division on the Church and Race. Under its guidance, a call was issued for Methodists to join the March on Washington, with great response; delegates were sent to the Second Methodist Conference on Human Relations in Chicago; two ministers were sent to Birmingham, Alabama, to attend the funeral of children murdered when a Baptist Church was bombed and to hold conversations with persons there on what the New York Conference could do; a letter was sent throughout the conference calling for support for the Civil Rights Bill in Congress; and four ministers were sent as a conference delegation to Jackson, Mississippi, as part of a pilgrimage of Methodist ministers from many cities following the arrest of three college students attempting to attend a Jackson Methodist Church. The ministers were themselves arrested while trying to worship at Methodist churches in integrated groups. The resulting legal battle, still in process at that time, prodded the Conference Board to recommend a special Freedom Fund to finance future activities and pilgrimages.[121]

In addition to the Board sponsored activities, it was noted with satisfaction that numerous conference ministers and members were involved in demonstrations at three New York City construction cites to protest discrimination in the building trades unions and the use of public funds where discrimination in hiring existed and that "large numbers" of Methodist churches served as "Freedom Schools" during the New York School boycotts, in which many ministers participated. The list of actions taken demonstrates that the Conference had quickly moved beyond the response that was limited to generalized statements unrelated to involvement and participation. It is important to note, also, that the activities of conference personnel were not limited to forays into the South. However, those activities directed to problems within the conference boundaries were not directly sponsored by the Conference Board.

---

[121] Journal of the New York Conference, 1964, pp. 203-4.

After citing the actions taken, the Board made a number of recommendations urging support for study and action on problems within the Church and in society. Of special note was the continuation of the subdivision on the Church and Race to focus concern and efforts, the extensive concern for problems related to integration in the schools, and the proposal that an executive secretary be hired under the Conference Board of Christian Social Concerns.[122]

In 1965, the recommendation for a full time executive was repeated, ministers who had participated in activities in Mississippi, in Selma, Alabama, and in Harlem were commended, and the projects of several civil rights groups were supported. Support was also given for programs in housing, integrated communities, pastoral appointments and school integration plans.[123] Thus, the final two years of this program revealed a dramatic shift in the response of the conferences that merged in 1964. Prior to that time there had been almost no mention of problems in the community. The lack of attention to problems in New York City was especially noticeable. The two New York conferences had expressed consistent concern for problems in the Church, but almost no action had been prescribed. In 1964 and 1965, we see a complete change in the pattern of response. Although the change was undoubtedly in large measure due to the events of the times that changed the climate of the entire nation, the appointment of a special sub-division on Church and Race probably helped considerably.

---

[122] Journal of the New York Conference, 1965, pp. 204-7.

As we have seen, in the 1955 to 1960 period, the Detroit Conference was the only conference among those in our study that consistently backed up its statements with some kind of action. In the 1961 to 1965 period, many of these interests were continued and others were added. A Methodist Youth Interracial Weekend was held yearly at least until 1965, and statewide Methodist Convocations on Race were held in 1963 and 1964.[124] In 1962, a study was done of Methodist institutions in the Conference, and two of these adopted an open policy for the first time.[125] In 1963 it was reported that a "Sharing Ministry" program had begun in the Detroit District among churches with varying economic and racial composition.[126] It also carried on a program of interracial visitation for Methodist families.[127]

---

[123] Journal of the New York Conference, 1965, pp. 678-80.

[124] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1963, p. 987, and Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1964, p. 112.

[125] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1962, p. 690.

In addition to these activities the conference expressed support or concern for numerous problems in the Church and the Society. It continued its interest in legislation for fair employment and housing, and it gave strong support for a Michigan Civil Rights Commission.[128] In the Church, it memorialized the General Conference on a number of matters including a stipulation that appointments be made regardless of race; a requirement that Methodist institutions either establish a good policy in terms of race by May 31, 1966 or forfeit Church funds which would be held in escrow; and a requirement that a loan from the General Board of Missions to a local church be dependent on assurances that it is open to serve all people regardless of race.[129] The Conference also expressed a desire to go beyond mere abolition of the Central Jurisdiction to what now constitutes step two of the Plan of Action for Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction.[130]

Despite the long history of concern for race relations in the Detroit Conference, which included a previously cited statement in 1956 that race relations was the most critical domestic problem in the United States, the events of 1963 and 1964 apparently affected it too. In 1964, the Journal contains this statement, "Since the last session of the Annual Conference we have been made aware that we are in the midst of a social revolution in race relations in the United States."[131] This statement precedes mention of the bombings in Birmingham, the freedom marches, the National Race Convocations, the March on Washington, and the civil rights law. It is a curious statement in terms of the Detroit Conference history, but it is worth mentioning in relation to the previously cited dramatic increase in concern within the annual conferences after 1963.

---

[126] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1963, p. 987.

[127] Ibid., pp. 111-112.

[128] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1965, pp. 489-492.

[129] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1963, p. 1139.

[130] Ibid., p. 988.

In 1965, the Detroit Conference took one of the most decisive actions related to race of any conference in the entire post-War period. The previous year it had adopted a general policy that contracts for church building or repairs would contain requirements of non-discrimination in employment on the part of the contractor. In 1965, in order to "implement the use of (its) financial resources as a moral force" to achieve the principles adopted in 1964, the Conference followed the lead of other denominations by adopting the "Affirmative Action Standard for Contract Performance," which contains the following provisions.

> 1. ...In connection with the performance of work under this contract or purchase order, the contractor or supplier agrees as follows:
>   1. The contractor or supplier will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed, color or national origin. The contractor or supplier will take affirmative action to insure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed,

---

[131] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1964, p. 114.

   color, or national origin. Such action shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship.
   2. The contractor or supplier will, in all solicitation or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, state that all applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin.
   3. The contractor or supplier will take such action with respect to any sub-contract or purchase order as the contracting agency may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions, including sanctions for non-compliance.
2. The setting up of standards of procedure to implement this Affirmative Action by the Board of Social Concerns through its Committee on Racial and Cultural Relations in consultation with the Board of Missions and Church Extension, which may include:
   a.) review of the contractor's present hiring practices and
   b.) a procedure to review compliance by some person or agency.
3. The development of similar procedures concerning contracts and purchase orders for goods and service.
4. The development of similar procedures related to financial and lending institutions including investment.
5. The circulating of these principles and procedures to our churches, and all church related institutions.
6. The principles of employment stated herein shall apply also to the employment of members of the staff of the local church.[132]

By this action, the Detroit Conference committed itself to use what may be its greatest single source of power in the community to improve employment practices. As we have seen from the results of the questionnaire sent out to all Conference Chairmen of Boards of Christian Social Relations, the utilization of conference buying power is rare. The potential in this type of action is great, indeed. Among the conferences in our study, the Detroit Conference is the only one to use economic power to this extent.[133]

---

[132] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1965, pp. 491-492

The Rock River Conference presents perhaps the most striking case of the sudden shift in response to the racial crisis after 1963. Although the Conference includes Chicago, the scene of increasing racial friction in the post-War period, the response of the Conference to race had been late in coming and had been peculiarly insular when it developed. As we have seen, the response in the 1955 to 1960 period was directed wholly to the problems within the Church. In the early years of the 1961 to 1965 period, the Conference response remained modest in scope and intensity and directed only to problems in the Church.

Thus, in 1961, the Conference approved and welcomed merger with the Lexington Conference, undertook a poll of church related institutions on their practices,[134] and voiced some concern about housing problems.[135] The following year their action was limited to sending application blanks for a study book to all ministers and holding an Interracial Conference. The limited stage of development of the understanding of the problem and modes of participation is well represented by three recommendations put forth. First, the local churches were urged to begin studying and discussing the issues involved in conference merger so that there would be a proper climate for support. Second, the General Board of Social Concerns was urged to call representatives of the fourteen annual conferences within the boundaries of the Lexington Conference together to discuss issues. Third, a recommendation was made to the Bishop that he send an episcopal letter to all churches "reminding us that membership is by invitation of Jesus Christ and by confession of faith", and that there is a responsibility to serve all, "even though new people in the community may not be exactly the same type that has previously been a part of the congregation."[136] In our assessment of the role of the Church as a leader it is well to bear in mind that in 1962 a conference encompassing a major area of racial conflict was only advocating beginning discussion and study of issues involved.

---

[133] The resolution of the Conference on Project Equality in 1965 has been followed by a series of letters in 1966 to Methodist pastors and administrators of Methodist agencies in the Detroit Conference. Bishop Loder sent a letter dated March 31, 1966, reminding the recipients of the Conference action, calling for cooperation, and including a Project Equality form to be sent to all suppliers. Letters from the Board of Social Concerns on April 4, April 8, and April 14, 1966, gave further information. Of particular note, the letter of April 8th indicated that a list of suppliers willing to comply with Project Equality standards would be sent to Conference churches and institutions.

In a further action, the Detroit and Michigan Conferences, which make up the Michigan Area, met for three days in November, 1965, to develop a program of action on race for Methodists in the state. The program of action contains many specifics and has had wide distribution since that time with the bishop's full support. These were sent out in a pamphlet entitled, "To Pursue These Goals," n. d., distributed throughout Michigan under cover letter of Bishop Loder.

[134] Journal of the Rock River Conference, 1961, p. 55.

The situation did not change a great deal in 1963. In that year, the Conference resolved to support the Bishop in appointments regardless of race and called upon every local church to examine its conscience on the matter, favored a fair housing bill, and made public its concern for those personally involved in the race issue.[137] The report of the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs listed as achievements cross-conference conversation on inclusiveness, participation in the National Conference on Religion and Race, participation in interracial visitation through the Women's Society of Christian Service, and home visitations. Its recommendations were limited to the use of We Can and We Will, a study book for the Church, and a filmstrip, familiarization with several books dealing with the Central Jurisdiction, and exchanges of congregations, pulpits, and parsonages.[138] Again, the concern is almost totally directed to intra-Church matters and is limited entirely to suggestions on study and listing of various forms for interracial contact. There was one sign in 1963 of the change that was to come in the Conference in 1964 and 1965. A resolution was introduced to raise $125,000 for interracial housing.[139] The resolution was defeated, but it was to fare better later.

---

[135] _Ibid._, p. 189.

[136] _Journal of the Rock River Conference, 1962_, pp. 198-99.

The shift in response in 1964 in the Rock River Conference was not as great as was the case in some of the other conferences studied. More discussion sessions were held with the Lexington Conference and a variety of study and interracial exchange suggestions were made.[140]

---

[137] Journal of the Rock River Conference, 1963, pp. 79-81.

[138] Ibid., pp. 226-227. [139] Ibid., p. 81.

[140] Journal of the Rock River Conference, 1964, pp. 185-6.

In addition to these suggestions, however, were two distinctive items. The first was the passage by a 206 to 185 vote of a request that the Conference Board of Christian Social Concerns study the possibility of a capital fund campaign goal of $130, 000. It was proposed that $100, 000 of the fund be used for housing projects to further residential integration and $30, 000 be divided between the Mississippi Delta Mission Project of the National Council of Churches and the Racial Witness Relief Fund established by the 1964 General Conference. The successful vote followed a declaration that "Methodism must take drastic steps to eradicate all traces of racism within its life". The proposed fund was tied to the long-standing concern for merger with the Lexington Conference by the following statement,

> A significant investment of Rock River Conference resources and commitment in specific efforts for social justice would be a most dramatic and meaningful evidence to our Lexington Conference brethern that our invitation to merge is extended in good faith.[141]

The second distinctive action was the appointment of a minister of the Conference to the office of Director of Inter-Group Relations for the conference year. His work was directly related to the task of the Inter-Conference Committee, which was to plan for eventual consolidation of the Lexington and Rock River Conferences. The main function of the Director was to facilitate the exchange of information and coordinate inter-racial activities between the conferences. He also represented the Conference at various interfaith and community civil rights meetings. The importance of the appointment was that much more attention could be given to matters related to race. In addition, it gave added incentive to a proposal that a full-time executive secretary be assigned to the Conference Board of Christian Social Concerns.

---

[141] Ibid., pp. 67-8.

In 1965 the Rock River Conference took one of the most significant actions related to race of any of the conferences studied. The year before, it had approved study of a $130, 000 program on race. On the basis of that mandate, the Board of Christian Social Concerns outlined a three year, $180, 000 program for the conference, which was adopted. This program, to cover the years 1966 through 1968, if successful, will constitute the largest single commitment of any agency or body of The Methodist Church made in response to the racial crisis in the nation.[142] It is especially important in assessing the total response of The Methodist Church in that the Church has refused to commit large sums to race through its Board of Christian Social Concerns, and, unlike other denominations, has not developed a special commission on race. In addition, The Methodist Church has made only a minimal contribution to the work of the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of

---

[142] Since the adoption of the three year, $180, 000 program by the Rock River Conference, the National Division of the Board of Missions voted to give $70, 000 to the Delta Ministry of the National Council of Churches. If that action, taken in September, 1966, is repeated in succeeding years, then this commitment would represent the largest single commitment by any agency or body within the Church.

Churches.[143] The national agencies of the Church have been neutralized on this issue by strong sectional interests that most other denominations do not face with their more restricted geographical location. The commitment of the Rock River Conference, therefore, balances to some extent the comparative response of the denominations, and, more important, indicates a source of great potential strength in The Methodist Church. The purpose of the fund and the way in which it is to be utilized is seen in the proposal cited here,

> Introduction
>
> The 1964 session of the Rock River Conference directed the Board of Social Concerns to study a resolution (pp. 67-68, 1964 Journal and Year Book) regarding the raising of funds for the purpose of (1) eliminating racism within and without the life of The Methodist Church, and (2) extending a tangible witness of good faith to the brethren of the now-merged Lexington Conference by the commitment of financial resources toward the goal of racial justice. The Conference further directed the board to report its recommendations to the next session of the Conference. The following proposal from the Board of Christian Social Concerns, unanimously approved on January 9, arises out of this directive.
>
> The Proposal
>
> The General Conference of The Methodist Church has called the followers of John Wesley to renewal at the point of racial division both as citizens of a nation seeking "liberty and justice for all" and as "citizens of heaven" seeking the unity of Christ's body so that "the world might believe." The call is clear and urgent:

---

[143] Whereas several denominations, including the United Church of Christ, Lutheran Church and the United Presbyterian, have donated forty to sixty thousand dollars per year, The Methodist Church, with the largest membership have given only five to ten thousand dollars per year through two agencies of the Church. Interview, Robert Spike, Director Commission on Religion and Race, National Council of Churches, December, 1965.

> With respect to race, the aim of The Methodist Church is nothing less than an inclusive church in an inclusive society. The Methodist Church therefore calls upon all her people to perform those faithful deeds of love and justice in both church and community as will bring this aim into full reality.
>
> --from the 1964 General Conference report
> "The Methodist Church and Race."

To this end---the inclusive church and the inclusive society--we submit the following proposal to secure financial resources from the people of the Rock River Conference. We believe that the urgency of the need is present and compelling. To delay this task would be to rub deeper the wounds inflicted by many generations, and allow the cancerous cells of prejudice and segregation to reproduce at a malignant pace. Consequently, we recommend:

> That the Rock River Conference permit the Board of Christian Social Concerns to seek a minimum goal of $60,000 in each of the remaining years of the Quadrennium (1966-67-68) by means of the voluntary contributions from churches who have already paid or arranged to pay their full conference apportionments.
>
> The following yearly allocation of funds:
>
> 1. THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES MISSION PROJECTS IN THE UNITED STATES - CHICAGO AND MISSISSIPPI -- $30,000.
>
>   This two-pronged mission emphasis, in cooperation with the National Council of Churches and the Church Federation of Greater Chicago (for the Chicago project), focuses upon the establishment of human dignity through an open society and the development of lay witness and involvement.
> 2. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS -- $30,000.
>
>   The rapid rise of community organizations, particularly in urban areas, and the increase of government activity in areas of economic and social deprivation (e. g. the war on poverty) calls forth serious involvement by the church to provide constructive leadership in mounting an effective attack on the deepseated problems of urban life. Methodist churches in the areas of greatest need are unable to provide the financial underwriting that such organizations require. Consequently, resources must come from a wider fellowship. A constant accreditation and review policy will be maintained by the Division of Human Relations of the Board of Christian Social Concerns.[144]

---

[144] Journal of the Rock River Conference, 1965, pp. 105-106.

The adoption of the plan to raise $180,000, as important as it was, was the only significant break in the pattern of response in the Rock River Conference. The Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs suggested a number of "concrete actions to be a guide for the people of the Rock River Conference in seeking the inclusive church and the inclusive society."[145] Included in the list were proposals to expand understanding and contacts in the now-merged conferences and urging of action to end segregation in housing and schools. The Conference also declared its support for fair housing legislation and the congressional challenge to the election of Mississippi congressmen.[146] The single instance of involvement by Conference representatives reported was the participation of five members officially designated to join a march and demonstration protesting segregation and inequality in education in Chicago.[147]

Throughout the post-War period, the response of the Rock River Conference has been almost completely limited to generalized statements, and further, restricted to issues within the Church. Its most consistent concern, and area of leadership, has been with relations with the Lexington Conference leading to merger. The silence on most issues in the city of Chicago during this period is especially notable. The single instance of a response geared to demonstrate the commitment of the conference and involve it through its economic power was the passage of the $180,000 program in 1965.

---

[145] Ibid., pp. 55-60. See also Christian Social Concern Report, p. 96ff.

[146] Ibid., 55-60.

[147] Ibid., p. 106.

Chicago Methodism has not been without activists on race. Methodists for Church Renewal and the Interracial Council of Methodists of Metropolitan Chicago, both unofficial groups, have been concerned and involved in racial matters in the local area. In addition, they have joined others in sending representatives to trouble spots in the South. For a time, there was a continual pilgrimage of Methodist ministers from Chicago to Mississippi. Methodists have also worked with civil rights organizations and interfaith groups in Chicago. This study, however, is devoted to the response of The Methodist Church through its organizational structure. Responses of individual ministers or members and of unofficial groups are outside the purview of the study. The response as structured and supported by the Rock River Conference, with the exceptions noted, has been surprisingly minimal.

Evaluation of the Response Mediated through the Annual Conferences

Our evaluation of the annual conferences must be done within the framework of the limitations stated at the outset of this chapter. We made clear there that questionnaire responses could be taken only as indicative of patterns and that we were only analyzing the responses of selected annual conferences as reported in the journals. Nevertheless, certain clear patterns do emerge which help us to understand the nature of the Methodist response to the present racial crisis and the pervasive effect of the historical picture outlined in Part I on the Church today. Beyond that, since the annual conference is defined as the basic body in the Church, we gain some valuable insights that will contribute to our assessment of the wider question of the Church and social action within which this work is framed. Our assessment falls generally into two areas: (1) Important sectional differences as determined by cultural differences and the past history of the Church in relation to Negroes, and (2) The kinds of actions taken and the timing of the responses.

(1) The disparity between the pattern of responses of the three southern conferences, taken together, and the pattern of responses of the other conferences included in our study, taken together, is somewhat striking. The differences were apparent in the responses to the Questionnaire sent to Chairmen of Conference Committees of Human Relations and Economic Affairs and in the information available in conference journals. Both cultural differences and the distinctive history of the Church traced in Part I affected the nature of the responses. We will here isolate some of the sectional differences and attempt to identify the causes.

(a) The historical inheritance. The attitude of the individual conferences toward the Central Jurisdiction was demonstrably different along sectional lines, and the differing positions taken in the period leading toward the Union were often reflected and occasionally quoted. Specific differences on the Central Jurisdiction issue included differing, often conflicting, positions on how the General Conference should handle the problem and widely divergent views on what constituted adequate steps toward inclusiveness across jurisdictional lines. Thus, in the North, several invitations for merger were forthcoming, and finally accepted, while in the South, in the conferences studied, movement toward interjurisdictional relations did not go beyond a variety of joint meetings.[148] Recently, the Southeastern Jurisdiction has voted to invite the Central Jurisdiction conferences within its boundaries to transfer into the Southeastern Jurisdiction. However, the invitation includes a proviso that merger would follow when it was mutually agreeable, according to the two-step plan, and the Central Jurisdiction has rejected any arrangement that does not include merger or definite plans about the timing of merger. The position taken by the annual conferences in our study, as well as that of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, is consistent with the historical position of the Church, South, prior to the Union. Certainly change has occurred, but in the two-step plan and in actions to date we see the continued pattern of the Church in the South holding to its protection of regional autonomy and preservation of the historic pattern of relations between the races. Changes are occurring, however, and here we see the emerging strength of the Negro membership in the Church, as well as the impact of the Church of the growing concern over civil rights in the nation. Thus far, there has been very little change at the local church level.

---

[148] South and North are used here to refer to those selected conferences from the South and the four conferences from the North plus the Southern California-Arizona Conference. Although this pattern is instructive in terms of patterns and in demonstrating extremes within the Church, it must be remembered that there are annual conferences in the upper South and the South Central Jurisdiction that are not included in this study but might fall under the general term South. In the South Central Jurisdiction, transfer and merger agreements have been carried out with the Central Jurisdiction conference within the boundaries of the state of Missouri. Conferences in the upper South have moved towards merger, but jurisdictional maneuvering by the Southeastern and Central Jurisdictions prevents consummation of such plans.

(b) The cultural influence. Although the history of the attitude and action of whites in The Methodist Church toward Negroes is of central importance, unquestionably, there are strong cultural influences contributing to the differences in sectional responses. In a sense, historical and cultural influences cannot arbitrarily be separated. Indeed, the cultural framework of the South was seen to have played a crucial role in shaping the nature of the Union of 1939. Nevertheless, historical positions would not continue to exhibit such strength were it not for the continuing impact of cultural factors. We may identify at least three areas affected by such factors. First, there are strong social and economic pressures in the South mitigating against any relaxation of the traditional separation of the races. This is evident in the political scene in such states as Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. The history of school desegregation in the thirteen years since the Supreme Court decision attests to the strength of resistance to change. The increased tempo of activity of the Ku Klux Klan also attests to the resistance to change. The effects of such a climate in the Church are seen in numerous instances. One of the respondents to the Questionnaire spoke of the difficulties surrounding the hiring of a Negro organist for a local church; there has been continued resistance to open worship in Mississippi; and in several instances in Alabama, South Carolina, and North Carolina, to be discussed in Chapter VII under the National Division of the Board of Missions, attempts to integrate local church programs have been thwarted by economic pressure, threats of physical violence, and acts of violence. Thus, on the part of some Methodists, there has been an apparent identification with attempts to resist changes in patterns between the races. The Western North Carolina Conference spoke forthrightly on the matter of Methodists and Ku Klux Klan membership. Where steps toward change have occurred, they have been of limited nature due, in part, to the pressures in that region. Second, the understanding of inclusiveness on the part of southern Methodists is apparently different than that expressed in Church statements, and it is very different from the conception of inclusiveness held by Negroes of the Central Jurisdiction. The latter seek integration at the basic level of the Church, the local congregation, and in the various programs of the annual conferences. The Southeastern Jurisdiction, representing the white Methodists in the South, has supported the principle of inclusiveness, but it has continually fought for an organizational change that would leave Negro annual conferences and local churches intact. It is apparent that the majority of southern members of the Church are not prepared to accept integration in the basic life of the Church at this time. Two conferences in the Southeastern Jurisdiction have now voted for merger, but the controlling voice in the Jurisdiction still rejects this position. Third, whenever any of the three southern annual conferences in our study suggested "action," it was always in the form of individual efforts to create better relations. It may be well argued that there is a strong parallel here between southern attitudes towards governmental programs and labor unions and the resistance to collective action on the part of the Church. This historic support for individual responsibility may reflect a major cultural difference between northern and southern sections of the country that is seen both within the Church and in the society.

One other sectional difference that should be mentioned appears to be a further indication of the intricate relation of cultural and historical influences. We have seen at several points in this study how the Southeastern Jurisdiction and the Central Jurisdiction have played a central part in determining the course of action to be followed in resolving the dispute over the Central Jurisdiction. The point that we would make here is that these are the only two jurisdictions that fully use the jurisdictional structure to promote the ongoing life of the Church. There is some variation among the remaining jurisdictions in the extent of utilization of the available structure, but none of them approaches the pattern of the Southeastern or Central Jurisdiction. The Central Jurisdiction implements the work of the Church among the large bulk of Negroes in The Methodist Church. Lately, it has emerged into a viable leadership position in the Church because of the importance of the race issue for the Church. The Southeastern Jurisdiction has utilized the authority given to it in the Constitution to develop programs of its own on a regional basis. The jurisdictional structure was largely on outgrowth of the insistent demand on the part of the Church, South, that its minority interests be protected in any unified body. The Southeastern Jurisdiction embodies both the conception of many southerners that the direction of the life of the Church ought to be close to the people and the intention to protect the interests of the Church in the Southeast against the absolute power of the majority in the Church. The situation in some ways parallels the states' rights-federalism argument in the nation. With the exception of the South Central Jurisdiction, the other jurisdictions have not used the structures extensively, and there has been a stated willingness by representatives of at least two that the jurisdictional system ought to be abolished.

(c) Intra-sectional differences. One of the most significant things demonstrated by this study is the degree of difference in attitude and response that exists within both the North and the South. Too often, the matter of race in the Church is seen as a northern-southern dispute. Historic and cultural factors give strength to the assertion that there is such a dispute, and General Conference debates on race often become North-South contests. However, little or nothing has been said about the disparity that exists within each of these sections. Our analysis of the selected annual conferences revealed a spread within each section often nearly as great as the disparity between North and South. In the South, the differences between the North Alabama Conference and the Western North Carolina Conference were evident throughout most of the post-War period. The important differences in the South were on the matter of attitude toward the issue of race. In the North, there were important differences among the various conferences. The most striking differences among the various conferences were between the Detroit Conference, with a consistent pattern of action, and the Rock River Conference, which developed its response only recently. The significant difference in the North was not on the basic attitude toward racial issues, but on the extent to which the matter was dealt with at all. The importance of the intra-sectional differences is the affect this must have on any conclusions to be drawn about the Church and social action. Any assessment about the Church and social action must take into full account the necessity of measuring important differences within the Church on crucial issues, and the analysis must move far beyond the expected differences related to obvious major dividing lines within the Church.

(2) Kinds of Actions and Timing of Response. We have noted repeatedly throughout this chapter certain limitations of the responses of the annual conferences. Recapitulation here will focus our attention on this problem and will help us in our assessment in the concluding chapter. The most important limitations included the following:

(a) Annual conference responses too often were limited to statements of concern or appeals for involvement without any specification of actions to be taken or programs to be initiated. Statements are of somewhat weak utility because they fail to assign responsibility to any individuals and they usually are not supported by funds or personnel. One dramatic example of an ineffective statement was presented by the Southern California-Arizona Conference when it cited problems in the Watts area of Los Angeles prior to the riots there, but made no recommendations for ways in which to deal with the problems.

(b) There was very hesitant use of financial power, which is one weapon the Church has available to it. Lately there have been one or two dramatic examples of attempts to use purchasing power to bring about change or efforts to raise large amounts of money to invest in the struggle for civil rights to demonstrate the Church's commitment. In the main, however, even though conferences supported equal employment opportunities, financial power was not used to secure such goals.

(c) As we have seen, the responses of the annual conferences have been greatly affected by the increased tempo of events in the nation related to civil rights. Not only have the responses increased in number, but the nature of response has changed. The most dramatic change occurred after 1963 with the increased willingness to commit personnel and funds to civil rights programs. The support of Project Equality by the Detroit Conference and the three year, $180,000 program adopted by the Rock River Conference were the two most dramatic examples of the commitment of conference power and funds. Involvement in social affairs on a group basis was the most important change that occurred in the post-War period.

(d) The focus of the majority of statements, resolutions, and programs adopted by the annual conferences was on problems related to race within the Church. The importance of this observation is that the Church's stated goal involves inclusiveness in both the Church and the society. The major exceptions to the pattern of inwardness occurred after 1963 when most of the denominational bodies in the United States joined in support of the civil rights movement. The important question for the wider problem of Church and social action is whether the changes after 1963 represent a temporary response to a problem gripping the whole nation or a basic change in understanding of Church and social action. The importance of the larger question is seen in the fact that involvement in social action is included in the Confession of 1967 to be voted on by the United Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., this year.

(e) In the main, in those conferences which increased their involvement in the civil rights movement in the last few years, there has been more commitment of funds and personnel to problem areas outside of the immediate annual conference area than to problems within the conference bounds. This has meant that northern conferences have been sending men and money to the South. One major exception to this emphasis has been the Project Equality Program of the Detroit Conference, although this does not involve any major expenditures. There have been some other notable efforts in the Rock River and New York conferences. What has been lacking, however, has been any consistent effort to change basic patterns of segregation in housing and employment patterns on the part of the four conferences in our study that are in the North. The Southern California-Arizona Conference has been involved in the open housing battle in California. Major confrontations on race have been in the South, and commitments of men and personnel to that area is understandable and commendable. However, the real test of commitment and effectiveness of the Methodist Church through its basic bodies, the annual conferences, will come in relation to problems within conference boundaries. More and more, it has become evident that large urban areas throughout the country face crucial race problems, and other problems that affect race, that cannot be avoided. Involvement on the part of the

Church in resolving these issues will mean confronting both the community and Church members on economic, political, and social matters where there is a great deal of vested interest. Such encounters have already arisen in the West over open housing. Other confrontations have occurred in cities where churches, acting collectively, have hired Saul Alinsky and his associates to lead in community organization efforts among the dispossessed. Such encounters, as is evident from the present situation in Rochester, New York, inevitably cause increased tensions in the community and in the churches. It is in such situations that we may determine whether or not the involvement of the churches in the civil rights movement indicates any major shift on the question of Church and social action.

(f) Finally, comparison of the selected annual conferences in our study reveals clearly that the conferences with the most effective programs are those which have delegated responsibility to an executive who is freed from all other responsibilities. One of the major difficulties in the response of many conferences to any problem is that leadership often falls to ministers ,or a minister , who must consider a wide range of problems in whatever spare time they have available after they fulfill their prior obligations to their local church. The appointment of a special sub-division that would deal only with race helped to focus interest and efforts in the New York Conference, but where a conference executive has been appointed, as in Detroit, the conference response has been more consistent and more forceful. Clearly, the kinds of problems which have arisen in relation to race cannot be dealt with effectively on an ad hoc basis. A number of conferences have been attempting to secure funds for conference executives. The success or failure of such attempts attests to the commitment of individual conferences to social action in each case.

The annual conferences are the basic bodies of The Methodist Church, and this chapter is of central importance to our final assessment of the total response of The Methodist Church to the present racial crisis. Even the limited analysis undertaken in this study, restricted to the Questionnaire and the eight annual conferences, adds much to our understanding of how The Methodist Church has responded to the racial crisis in various parts of the nation. Furthermore, it reveals how necessary it is to be cautious about any generalizations about the Church in the face of the great disparity of response that exists both sectionally and intrasectionally. The chapters on the bishops and on the boards and agencies of the Church will add to our understanding, but this chapter is the most important in our examination in Part II.

CHAPTER VI

THE RESPONSE OF THE BISHOPS

The General Conference is the highest legislative body and authority in The Methodist Church. The boards and agencies of the Church, with assigned specific tasks, the jurisdictional conferences, where they function in any real sense, and the annual conferences are the responsible bodies for carrying out the mandate of the General Conference in the quadrennium between General Conference sessions. As we have seen, the annual conferences, the basic bodies in the Church, determine to a large degree how effective the Church's witness will be in any specific area. The bishops serve as the chief executive or administrative agents of the Church in the annual conferences. They also share policy making positions on the boards of the Church with ministers, laymen, and elected staff members. Within each episcopal area, which may contain one or several annual conferences, the bishop stands as the chief authority, limited only by the Constitution and the process of appeal from his decisions.

Due to the close relation of the bishops to the annual conferences, our previous analysis of the annual conferences revealed to some extent where the bishops stand and how they have used their influence. We may pursue the matter further, however, by focusing attention on statements and actions of individual bishops and the response of the bishops taken collectively through the Council of Bishops. The latter may take the form of a pronouncement on a particular issue. In addition, the episcopal address to the General Conference is written by a bishop selected by the Council of Bishops, and it is read and criticized by the bishops prior to reading. Since we dealt with the episcopal addresses to some extent in Part I, our major focus here will be with individual bishops.

We shall deal first with the understanding and response of the bishops revealed in statements by individual bishops. We shall then turn to the actions of the bishops taken in response to the racial crisis. Finally, we shall consider the role the bishops have played and should play as seen by their own comment on this issue and in our analysis of their statements and actions.

The material for this chapter comes from a number of sources. Episcopal addresses, statements of the Council of Bishops, and some statements of individual bishops are available in General Conference _Journals_ and various Methodist periodicals. In addition, I submitted a request to all active bishops in the continental United States for copies of statements and speeches on the issue of race, information on actions they have taken in and out of the Church on racial matters, and their interpretation of the role of the bishops, individually and collectively. Over fifty per cent responded, and the information provided will serve as the single major source in this chapter.

There are certain problems concerning the material on which this chapter is based which must be noted at the outset. First, the bishops often act behind the scenes in their individual areas in ways which are never publicized. Second, information is not available on all bishops, either from printed material or from responses to my inquiry. Only two bishops from the Southeastern Jurisdiction responded with any information to the letter sent to all bishops. Third, statements by the bishops appear in widely disparate and often fugitive sources. It must be recognized, therefore, that our analysis is based on a selection of what is available. However, we shall be able to construct a representative description of what has been said and done by bishops in relation to the problem of race which will contribute to our analysis of the total response of the Church. Beyond that, our analysis of the material on the bishops will provide a good indication of the thinking of leaders in The Methodist Church on the whole issue of the Church and social action or social change.

The Understanding of the Bishops in the 1950's

As would be expected, the bishops have been affected by the events of the past two decades and their statements have become more frequent, specific, and forthright as the intensity of the situation has increased. The early thinking of the bishops on this issue is represented to some extent in the episcopal addresses to the General Conference since World War II. In 1956, however, the General Conference passed Amendment IX as a means of voluntary elimination of the Central Jurisdiction, and authorized a thorough study of the jurisdictional system by the Commission of 70. Soon after that, the Board of Social and Economic Relations sponsored a series of Interracial Leadership Conferences across the country designed to spread information and understanding about the problems facing the Church concerning race and to develop possible solutions. In all, nineteen such conferences were held between 1956 and 1959. In each case, representatives of one or two annual conferences of one of the five geographically determined jurisdictions met with representatives of the Central Jurisdiction conference located in the same region. Each conference was sponsored by the regional and Central Jurisdiction bishops in conjunction with the General Board of Social and Economic Relations. In most cases, addresses given by the bishops or a record of a colloquy between the bishops were included in the report of the Interracial Leadership Conferences. These reports give us a good indication of the state of thinking of bishops on the issue at that time and provide us with a point at which to begin our discussion.

Several themes were prominent in statements made by bishops at the conferences in the late 1950's. One consistent theme was the necessity of developing a base of understanding in the Church from which it would be possible to move forward. This note was struck by Bishop Branscomb of the Jacksonville Area of the Southeastern Jurisdiction at a conference held in Florida when he said that the purpose of the conference could be expressed in the words, "We are here."[1] Bishop Bowen of the Central Jurisdiction spoke of the chance for "heart-to-heart talks with our friends of the Southeastern Jurisdiction." He went on to comment on the necessity of developing understanding and avoiding undue haste in the following passage,

---

[1] Report of Interracial Leadership Conference, a report of a conference held at Bethune-Cookman College, Daytona Beach, Florida, September 10-11, 1957, (mimeographed) p. 7A.

> Another matter of propaganda or trying to persuade people to receive our point of view or any particular point of view, --I personally think that we miss the boat frequently in using our opportunities to open our hearts to one another, using that for the purpose of trying to persuade and convince too soon before we know one another. I think the finest thing that can come out of this is the opening of our hearts; the opening of our minds, getting into the experiences, one group to the other, and seeing if we cannot, each group, catch a little something of the point of view of the other, and take it to our hearts, into the depths of our minds, and think the things over, then gradually come to some conclusion--not a conclusion too soon.....[2]

These expressions by leaders in the Church illustrate well that at least for some this was a new problem to be encountered, and that the time for positing solutions and taking action had not yet arrived.

That the Church was only beginning to approach the problem of race, even within its structure, is seen in a statement made by Bishop Matthew W. Clair, Jr. at the Interracial Conference held in Ohio in 1959. As bishop of the St. Louis Area, Bishop Clair was responsible for the Lexington Conference of the Central Jurisdiction which spanned an area in which fourteen conferences of the regional jurisdictions were located. He participated in at least eight Interracial Conferences and often sounded the note seen in the following passage,

---

[2] Ibid., p. 7.

> I think that I always come back to -- I guess you feel that it has become an obsession with me -- to the matter of creating a climate of understanding, and I feel that if these folk who have had opportunity to share in this experience will go back to their churches and in communities where we have a church, in the Lexington Conference, establish some relationship with that church. Not through a singing group but to sit down together and study some of the matters that we have considered here at this Conference.
>
> It may be necessary before that is done to establish rapport so that you will be in a position to begin considering these problems, but know each church so that you at least can be on speaking terms in the community.[3]

Another theme that was often touched on was the readiness of the Central Jurisdiction to be absorbed into the regional jurisdictions. At that time there was some disparity of thought among bishops of the Central Jurisdiction. Bishop Love of the Balitmore Area stated the problem clearly when he said, "If we destroy (sic) or voted the Central Jurisdiction out tomorrow, we might still have as much segregation in The Methodist Church as we have now."[4] He went on to say that in a meeting of bishops of the Central Jurisdiction with bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, it had been inferred that if the Central Jurisdiction was dissolved Negro conferences would remain and white bishops would be elected to preside over them when Negro bishops retired. As we have seen, the problem of what would happen to present Negro leaders and the positions they now fill through constitutional apportionment, has been a consistent and unresolved issue throughout deliberations on the Central Jurisdiction.

---

[3] Ohio Methodist Interracial Conference Report, a report of a conference held at the Youth Center, State Fairgrounds, Columbus, Ohio, April 2-4, 1959, (mimeographed) p. 133. See also, Report of Interracial Leadership Conference, a report of a conference held at Indianapolis, Indiana, May1-2, 1957, (mimeographed) p. 59.

[4] Report of Bishops' Conference on Brotherhood, a report of a conference held at Brooks Memorial Methodist Church, Jamaica, New York, September 25, 1956, (mimeographed) p. 6.

The division over the problem stated by Bishop Love is revealed by opposing positions taken by Bishop Clair and Bishop Shaw in statements at two separate conferences. In a colloquy between Bishop Raines and Bishop Clair at the Indiana Interracial Conference, Bishop Raines put the question squarely when he said to Bishop Clair, "... do you really want to come in and have no Central Jurisdiction?" Bishop Clair answered in the affirmative and in support of his response said,

> I say that because I truly believe that we won't be Christian -- I mean Christian in the real sense -- until we have become a church which has forgotten all its barriers and has become color-blind, which doesn't see people except as individuals who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. We can't have that until what you have asked has come to pass.[5]

Bishop Raines persisted in his questioning by asking if Negroes in the Church were prepared for a decrease in representation. In response, Bishop Clair elaborated some of the expected changes that would result in lost representation and again expressed willingness to proceed.

Bishop Alexander P. Shaw took a position quite opposite to that of Bishop Clair in an exchange with Bishop Gerald H. Kennedy at a Conference on Human Relations in Glendale, California, in February, 1958. Bishop Kennedy spoke of what he termed "an obvious reluctance on the part of the leadership of the Central Jurisdiction to do anything to break it up..." Since there was opposition to whittling away the Central Jurisdiction, he asked Bishop Shaw if there were any alternative way in which the Central Jurisdiction could be eliminated. In his response, Bishop Shaw admitted that there was some hesitation, and that part of that hesitation rested on concern over leadership positions in the Church. He said,

---

[5] Report, Indianapolis Conference, op. cit., p. 55.

> There is a little hesitation, I think, on the part of the Bishops of the Central Jurisdiction regarding the whittling away of the Central Jurisdiction before some definite arrangement can be made -- not only for the conferences and church, but naturally for the Bishops themselves.
>
> Now to a person not in the Episcopacy it's very easy to see how a fellow can give it up pretty easily. But all of the plans that I have heard, that have seemed to have had anything like the unanimous choice of the people -- that is Methodist generally -- practically eliminates Negro leadership from the district superintendency on up.[6]

Bishop Shaw elaborated this concern about leadership positions by saying that he had heard "discussion even in the Council of Bishops that there would probably be no continuation of Negro Leadership as high up as the Episcopacy." He said that prior to the Union there had been a 'Gentlemen's Agreement' about Negro succession to the episcopacy. Now, however, no such agreement would obtain and Negroes were reluctant to change under such conditions. Bishop Shaw was also concerned about a process of elimination of the Central Jurisdiction that would not lead to closer contact of the people, in the South especially.[7]

---

[6] Conference on Human Relations, a report of a conference held at First Methodist Church, Glendale, California, February 11-13, 1958, (Mimeographed) p. 81.

[7] Ibid., pp. 81-82.

Bishop Kennedy responded to Bishop Shaw's admission of reluctance with a very strong statement suggesting that talk about segregation should stop and the jurisdictions should be defended as protecting minority rights. He compared the situation of the Central and Western Jurisdictions in saying,

> It seems to me that we are thus driven to this conclusion that there is no possibility of eliminating the Central Jurisdiction all in one stroke. Why don't we stop talking, therefore, about segregation? Let's talk about jurisdictions as protection of minority rights. I know Bishop Shaw is anxious about it and I can understand that. We know that is the talk out here in the Western Jurisdiction. We get more representation on boards than we deserve according to the size of our membership because we are a jurisdiction. So does the Central Jurisdiction. Since, therefore, there seems to be no chance of eliminating the Central Jurisdiction, let's keep it and tell the world that it isn't segregation, but it's protection of minority rights and we must continue the Central Jurisdiction.[8]

Bishop Shaw responded to this challenge with a statement that demonstrates some of the real problems that have been involved in the attempt to eliminate the Central Jurisdiction. His statement was,

> I might say just a word on it. It may seem just a little contradictory, but the College of Bishop of the Central Jurisdiction agreed that the Central Jurisdiction should be abolished, but that it should not be abolished in a hurry, and that it should be abolished when practically every interest of those concerned can be reasonably well taken care of.[9]

He went on to suggest measures that would lead to the removal of "the segregation clause" from the Constitution of the Church but would leave Negro conferences intact and would preserve the opportunity for Negroes to be elected to the episcopacy.

---

[8] Ibid., p. 82.

[9] Ibid., p. 82.

The disparity in positions expressed by Bishops Clair and Shaw illustrates the depth of the problem even within the Central Jurisdiction. It is only recently that Central Jurisdiction spokesmen have become unified in their expressed willingness to take their chances on being elected to the episcopacy or national board positions. However, they have substituted demands for guarantees of equal placement opportunities for ministers within the conferences. Their demand for equal treatment coupled with the surrender of demands for preferential treatment gives their case added strength.

Some other concerns about race that demonstrate the state of thinking in the 1950's were related to intermarriage, what the Church can do in transition areas, the appointment of ministers across racial lines, and the understanding of what segregation means.

The question of intermarriage was raised in conferences in Indiana and in California. In Indiana, Bishop Raines spoke against interracial marriage on the practical grounds of difficulty for the couple and for children.[10] In California, Bishop Kennedy and Bishop Shaw also expressed opposition to it on practical grounds. There was no question that it was immoral, indeed, Bishop Kennedy made clear that it was not. All of the bishops queried merely questioned the wisdom of such marriage. It is interesting to note that at the Indiana Conference a speaker from the floor challenged the position taken by Bishop Raines by saying that if we say no to intermarriage, "then I have no right to stand up and suggest talking about doing away with the Central Jurisdiction, or uniting our churches."[11] No response was made to this at the time, but it is interesting to note that in 1965 the Detroit Conference came up with a resolution stating that race should not be used as a barrier in marriage. In that statement it was pointed out that the spector of intermarriage acted as a barrier to other changes in relations between the races.[12]

---

[10] Report, Indianapolis Conference, op. cit., pp. 62-63.

The problem of what to do in transition areas is one of the most vexing problems facing the Church in urban situations. This problem did not originate with the present confrontation between Negroes and whites, it has been a perennial problem in large cities since the nineteenth century. It is a peculiarly Protestant problem due in large part to the fact that until recently there has been little or no provision for denominational support or attempts to continue service to a particular parish when a congregation decides to move. The church building has generally been sold to the highest bidder for whatever use he desired. The problem has been directly associated with the racial confrontation in recent times as neighborhoods have changed from white to Negro.

The particular problem raised in the late 1950's in the Interracial Conferences had very little to do with integration. Rather, the prime question was how to "save" a church building traditionally Methodist for use by Methodists of the Central Jurisdiction. Very often, the Central Jurisdiction congregation has been unable to pay the asking price of the moving congregation. In many cases the building has been sold to a congregation of another denomination, and in other cases the building has been sold for commercial use, perhaps as a warehouse or used car salesroom.

---

[11] Ibid., p. 63.

[12] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1965, pp. 490-491.

Bishop Frank raised this issue at the Interracial Leadership Conference in St. Louis in 1957. At that time, he cited two instances within a ten month period in which congregations planning to move had sold their church buildings to non-Methodist buyers despite efforts by Central Jurisdiction congregations to buy. In both cases the asking price for the property was beyond the reach of the Negro Methodists.[13] In the Interracial Conference held in Ohio in 1959, the identical problem was cited.[14] In both cases, it was pointed out that local congregations have a great deal of autonomy when it comes to disposal of property, and that the prime concern in most cases centered on how much money any prospective buyer could pay.

The important thing for us to note is that integration was not the major issue. The question being raised was simply how to transfer a church building from a white Methodist congregation to a Negro Methodist congregation when the former moved out of an area. It was agreed that the decision in every case lay with the local board of trustees of the moving congregation. The only measures suggested centered on educating trustees to plan far enough in advance so that Central Jurisdiction congregations would have time to work out financial arrangements. The emphasis on inclusiveness today shifts the discussion to questions related to how a church may serve a community or parish in transition. Whereas segregation was an accepted, if deplorable, fact in the 1950's, today segregation, though recognized, is not so easily accepted.[15]

---

[13] Report of Interracial Leadership Conference, a report of a conference held at St. Louis, Missouri, May 9-10, 1957, (mimeographed) p. 78.

[14] Report, Ohio Conference, op. cit., pp. 136-137.

Another issue raised in the Interracial Conferences in the late 1950's touches on one of the major problems today concerning elimination of the Central Jurisdiction, namely, the appointment of pastors across racial lines. Central Jurisdiction spokesmen are demanding that guarantees of equal opportunity in pastoral appointments be made a part of any plan of merger of conferences. Numerous northern conferences have gone on record stating their willingness to support appointments regardless of race and their willingness to accept a Negro bishop or district superintendent. Despite the appointment system in The Methodist Church, however, the local church must in practice express its willingness to accept a prospective minister before he is appointed. As was seen in the chapter on annual conferences, some conferences have attempted to get each local church to declare its willingness to accept a pastor regardless of race. Bishop Newell of the New York Area and Bishop Kennedy of Los Angeles Area both responded to questions about appointments across racial lines by expressing a willingness to make such an appointment if a local church was willing to accept it. Bishop Newell emphasized the necessity of ensuring that such an appointment did not hurt either the minister or the church "to a greater degree than progress warrants."[16] Bishop Kennedy said that the desire of the local church, the desire of the man to be appointed, the opinion of the district superintendent, and the decision of the bishop all played a part in making an appointment. He emphasized the importance of the desire of the congregation when he said,

---

[15] We have noted that the major problem cited in the St. Louis and Ohio conferences was financial. In 1963 the Michigan Conference was confronted with a similar situation in Grand Rapids. In that case, the white congregation moved, and took their name with them, but the conference purchased the building to insure that a Methodist Church would serve the area. The conference is now paying for a minister who is trying to build a new Methodist congregation in the old church building. The commitment of conference funds indicates the determination of the conference to retain a Methodist witness in a transition area. No such solution was suggested when the question was raised in the 1950 Interracial Conferences. (Interview with Carl Strange, Chairman of the Michigan Conference Board of Christian Social Concern, July 13, 1965, Muskegon, Michigan.)

> Now, if I understood the question, you are talking about a Negro pastor being appointed to a white church. Well, we had one which was a special situation -- The Normandie Avenue Church. But so far as I know there has not come to my attention since I've been here the desire on the part of either a pastor or a church for such an appointment.[17]

This account is important because it points up the crucial role played by the local congregations in the success or failure of the Church's efforts toward inclusiveness. The autonomy of the local congregation and the annual conference is a factor that cannot be overlooked in assessing the performance or possibilities of The Methodist Church on any issue. After we have recognized the autonomy of the local congregation, however, we must ask whether the bishops or annual conferences have taken the initiative to encourage local congregations to seek or accept appointment of a minister across racial lines. Bishop Kennedy's statement indicates that he was not taking such initiative at that time. The analysis of the annual conferences indicates that some conferences, with the support of the bishop, are taking such initiative.

---

[16] Report, Jamaica Conference, op. cit., p. 11.

[17] Report, California Conference, op. cit., p. 84.

This disparity on initiative symbolizes a major problem within the Church on the question of social change. Limitations on authority, such as local autonomy, must be recongized, but the central question is how forcefully the responsible agent, whether bishop, board executive, or annual conference, is using its prestige and power to carry out the mandate of the General Conference. We must note, of course, that at the time of Bishop Kennedy's statement in 1958, very few conferences had taken a decisive stand. In the last two or three years it has become quite common.

There were three statements on segregation by bishops that should be noted. Bishop J. W. E. Bowen of the Central Jurisdiction gave a short address on the matter entitled, "Theological Basis for Christian Position in Race Relations," at the Interracial Leadership Conference in Atlanta in 1957. In that address he traced the development of thought from the Old Testament into the New and emphasized the reconciliation of man with man in Christ. In his positive interpretation of the unity brought about by the gathering of all in Christ, he said,

> Now no one can be "in Christ," and at the same time apart from, or beneath his brother whatever his culture, class, or color.... Now we are all members of one family under one Father. All are equal objects of his love and care -- black or white, educated or ignorant, cultured or uncultured, strong or weak, rich or poor. The church is the undivided body of Christ whose mission it is to unite all races and nations into a single brotherhood of worship and love
> ... What is important is not the tribe or the nation but individual persons as such, who, regardless of color, race, or nationality, where ever found, are worth living with and worth dying for.

In the conclusion of his address he spoke out strongly against segregation, saying,

> ... No branch of Christendom can long endure the inner contradiction [of] the cancer of segregation in a religion whose founder is regarded as The Mediator, whose chief ritual is Communion, whose central doctrines are At-one-ment and Reconciliation of God and man, whose sole strategy is a love that endures to the Cross.[18]

The emphasis by Bishop Bowen on reconciliation, on a brotherhood of worship and love, on individuals worth living with and dying for, and on the cancer of segregation clearly indicates that, for him, segregation must give way to inclusiveness or integration. In his interpretation, there is no doubt that a movement toward life shared by all in one body, the Church, is theologically sound and desireable. The disparity of thought among the bishops, though, and among Negro Methodists, is revealed in a statement on segregation by Bishop Shaw of the Central Jurisdiction one year after the address given by Bishop Bowen. During a colloquy at the Conference on Human Relations in Glendale, California, Bishop Shaw argued for the continuation of Negro conferences and protection of episcopal positions for Negroes and against intermarriage. A participant in the conference commented from the floor, "There seems to be an inconsistency between the idea that The Methodist Church officially believes in integration and the attitude that you have expressed as a Bishop of the Central Jurisdiction." Bishop Shaw's response, which displays an understanding quite different from that given by Bishop Bowen, was as follows,

---

[18] Report of Interracial Leadership Conference, a report of a conference held at Wesley Memorial Church, Atlanta, Georgia, January 28-29, 1957, (memiographed) pp. 83-84.

> I think we have confused a lot of these issues by making the word 'desegregation' and 'integration' synonymous. They are not synonymous. They are quite different matters. And if we could keep in mind the difference between desegregation and integration, *which after all is a personal matter, and has no content, I think, either religious or anti-religious*, so that I think the position of the Bishops of the Central Jurisdiction is not anti-Christian at all. In fact, the thing that we are seeking most is that here in America as citizens of this country we can move freely in practically every public matter and fill positions which we are capable of filling without the stigma of race. And I think the white race itself ought to be anxious to get rid of that especially in a democracy such as we talk about having. (emphasis mine)
>
> The matter of integration is not a religious question -- that is, so far as social marriage and all of that. But desegregation is a matter that is forced upon groups. You remember when President Eisenhower sent troops down to Little Rock. A howl went up from all over the Southland. 'We don't like to be forced.' Well, I just spoke back to the South and said, 'We don't like to be forced so far as segregation is concerned.' Do you not know that in this country we have places where you can travel all day and not find a place to eat (public places) because of your race? This is the sort of thing tied up in this segregation business, and that's the

> thing tied up in this segregation business, and that's the thing we oppose more than anything else. It is not so much integration. This segregation business is a stigma upon our civilization, and all of us ought to want to get rid of it or cease trying to make out that we are religious, or that we represent a democracy.[19]

Certainly, the Church must concern itself with desegregation. More and more, bishops and conferences have taken steps to support and involve themselves in actions directed to bring about the guarantee of equal opportunity in all areas of community life. The consistent theme of the Church has been, however, that inclusiveness involves a relation between individuals that goes beyond the mere availability of equal access to educational, economic, and political opportunities. The distinction between desegregation and integration is an important one, but Bishop Shaw's statement that integration is not a religious question is strange, indeed, in the light of the Church's consistent concern. There have been statements by some leaders that the Church should not be involved in legislative and economic moves geared to bring about desegregation. Such statements are generally coupled, however, with statements to the effect that legislation does not change people, and that the Church's major concern is for reconciliation, or integration, which is a step beyond legislation. Bishop Shaw's statement again points up the confusion over goals for The Methodist Church that prevailed in the late 1950's.

The third distinctive statement on segregation by a bishop in the course of the Interracial Conferences was made by Bishop Oxnam at a conference in 1956 in Baltimore, Maryland. The statement, which follows, is distinctive for its decisiveness and for the early date at which it was made.

---

[19] Report, California Conference, op. cit., pp. 85-86.

> To segregate is sin. I think we've got to lift this segregation matter into the realm of religious judgment. It isn't the question of a social custom that we are condemning, we are dealing with something that is sinful. To segregate is to sin. To segregate at the table of the Lord is to profane God's holy altar. It is not enough to prohibit segregation by legislation and judicial decision. The spirit that breeds segregation must be driven from the heart. The church must undergo the cleansing of conversion. We have no mission to the colored peoples of Africa and of Asia unless we have submission to Christ's command to love one another. We do not segregate those we love. The race problem will not be solved by the coward who would avoid responsibility by a Pilate-like washing of hands. Patience is to be practiced, acquiescence is to be rejected. The race problem will be solved by courageous and creative men who stand in the glory of the cross and live in accord with the way and the truth and the life of Christ. We dare not affirm the Christian faith with mental and moral reservations. Bad faith, un-proclaiming faith, is sin. A man is a brother or he is not.[20]

This particularly notable feature of the statement is the unqualified labeling of segregation as sin. Bishop Oxnam's statement was also unique in that he stressed the importance of "keeping the pressure on" in legislative matters, in education, and in the Church. This was the only statement by a bishop in all of these conferences in which there was a call for a strong stand in specified problem areas in society. He used the illustration of a boxer, the necessity for him to maintain an offensive posture. It is only recently that the church, through leaders and annual conferences, has moved from a position of neutrality to one of offense.

---

[20] Report of Interracial Leadership Conference, a report of a conference held at Walbrook Methodist Church, Baltimore, Maryland, December 3-4, 1956, (mimeographed) pp. 10-11.

One further position taken by a bishop in the Interracial Conferences should be noted. In an address to a Conference in St. Louis in 1957, Bishop Matthew W. Clair, Jr. gave a brief account of the history of Negroes in American Methodism. Throughout, he emphasized the theme that there has always been one group of Negroes arguing that Negroes should leave The Methodist Church while another group has consistently argued that it is best to work for change from within. He noted that there had been important defections of Negroes in the past and that the argument to leave was still heard. Bishop Clair rejected that argument on the basis that the prime need today was for understanding between the races, and further, that of all the churches, only The Methodist Church had a history of Negro and white relations out of which a climate of understanding could be created. Bishop Clair concluded his address by saying,

> I think we have come to the point now when the stand we have taken across the years is beginning to pay off. Social trends today lend themselves to the sort of strategy we have used across the years in The Methodist Church. Friends, all of the cry for desegregation will work only in so far as the two groups are willing to come together and create climates of understanding, and The Methodist Church to my mind is the only Church in this country who is in the position to create that sort of thing. We have the structure, we have the experience across the years of working together even to a limited extent. We will learn to work together even more intimately than we have across the years, and it is through the spirit of fellowship and understanding that we will accomplish the things we are dreaming of here in this country.
>
> Law may give you the foundation for the thing you want to do. But it is the spirit of understanding, the fellowship of working together that is going to create the thing for which the law gives you the foundation. The decision of the Supreme Court or the action of the General Conference will not themselves achieve the desired

> goals. We've got to struggle, we've got to learn to appreciate each other. We've got to lend ourselves to the spirit of God and in the interest of the Kingdom we must join hands in creating in our country the climate for victory in human relations. No matter where you go you will find that this is the best country. I have been privileged to travel many places and whenever I see the Statue of Liberty in the Harbor in New York, or put my feet on the shore around San Francisco or Los Angeles, I always bow my head and thank God. If we are going to make this country the sort of country it can become, make it possible for it to give to the world the moral and spiritual leadership she is capable of giving, and release to the world her spiritual heritage, we must learn now to live and work with all different people. That is how God's Kingdom will come.[21]

The importance of this statement is twofold. First, it touches on an important fact about The Methodist Church. Of all the "white" denominations in the United States, The Methodist Church has the highest proportion of Negro members and the largest number of Negro members. If the Central Jurisdiction is eliminated and successfully merged with other parts of the Church, Bishop Clair's position will have been supported. The extremely small growth of the Central Jurisdiction since Union and its segregated status have been arguments used against his position. Bishop Clair's statement is important to us, secondly, because it demonstrates again the existing situation within the Church in the late 1950's on the whole issue of race. That is, the necessity of creating an understanding of the problems involved and developing contact between the races, which were needs often cited, indicates that at that time the Church was just beginning to move to confront the issues related to racial differences.

---

[21] Report, St. Louis Conference, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

A statement made in Florida in 1957 by A. Dudley Ward, General Secretary of the General Board of Social and Economic Relations, which co-sponsored all of the conferences, illustrates well the situation that prevailed in the Church in the late 1950's. In a statement on the purpose of the conference, he said,

> It is obvious that the main thing is to be together, and to begin to know one another. We think it is highly important these days that in establishing relationships we should do it in reference to some specifics. The time is long since passed when The Church and its leaders can be general about these things. And the best way to understand each other and to be specific is to deal with common problems. In this Conference as you will see quite soon, we are dealing with three general areas of interest: One, what are the scientific, the Christian, and the Church foundations that bring us together?.....
>
> The second thing is to examine the State of Florida where the influx of economic and social life is so magnificent. The Church needs to consider its responsibility in relationship to this magnificent development.....
>
> The third area of interest is: Where do we go from here?...[22]

As we proceed to our analysis of what bishops have said and done since 1960, it will be important to bear in mind the understanding that prevailed in the late 1950's, as revealed in the statements of the bishops in the Interracial Conferences.

The Statements of Individual Bishops in the 1960's

Since the Interracial Conferences were held, the intensity of interest and involvement in the movement to change racial patterns in Church and society has increased greatly. The change in perspective over the last seven years, a change which has accelerated rapidly since

---

[22] *Report*, Florida,Conference, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

1963, may be seen in at least ten comparisons with the situation that existed in the 1950's.

(1) Today the emphasis is not on seeking to establish a base of understanding, rather, the emphasis is on taking steps to resolve the disparity between principle and practice.

(2) Instead of efforts to work out a plan for elimination of the Central Jurisdiction, encouragement and exhortation are used to gain acceptance for the plan adopted.

(3) Today, the Central Jurisdiction speaks with one voice. Certainly there are exceptions to this, but, as we have seen, the approach has become almost entirely unified over against the disparity seen in the bishops' statements in the 1950's.

(4) Intermarriage is either not mentioned any longer, or it is supported, as in the case of the Detroit Conference cited above.

(5) Whereas in the late 1950's the bishops were asking what to do in transition areas, today they report interracial churches and wider parishes in which churches work together. Segregation was openly accepted then. It may remain a fact now, but it is not accepted. Encouragement is given to churches to stay and minister to transitional neighborhoods, and bishops speak of the necessity of expending funds to support such churches.

(6) In the late 1950's, bishops in the North and West were quoted as ready to assign ministers across racial lines when the receiving church desired it. Today there is substantial effort to get churches to express

their willingness to receive a pastor regardless of race. Bishops tend much more to push this program rather than wait for the desire to develop in a local church.

(7) There is much more concern for what is going on outside the Church, which manifests itself in two ways: (a) expressions of support for the involvement of the Church, and (b) support for the activities of civil rights groups.

(8) There is much more willingness to accept Bishop Oxnam's stance, expressed in 1956, of keeping the pressure on.

(9) Although it is pushed with varying degrees of fervor, there is substantial agreement on the theological premises underlying the Church's goal of inclusiveness. The Discipline and the General Conference are cited as authorities.

(10) The question expressed in the late 1950's, as seen in the quotation from the Executive Secretary of the General Board of Social and Economic Relations, was, "Where do we go from here?" Today that question is being answered in specific terms in different locations according to disparate needs.

The changes cited represent the major pattern revealed in statements made by the bishops recently. It is true that the responses formulated vary greatly in degree of apparent willingness to commit funds and personnel or in possible effectiveness. Many of the statements of the bishops fall under the same judgment leveled at some of the conference pronouncements; that is, the statements exhort and urge in generalized terms without any specific suggestions for implementation. Nevertheless, there is much more willingness to take a critical view of the role of the Church, and it is not at all uncommon to find a bishop declaring quite forcefully that it is necessary to become directly involved in resolving a specific problem. Wide differences remain, of course, in basic interpretation of how best the problems related to race may be solved. Inspection of some of the positions taken, problems cited, and actions supported will give some indication of the present status of thinking among the bishops and some of the problems that remain in the Church. This is again done, of course, with the reservations about sources cited above.

One of the strongest indications of the contrast in thinking between the 1950's and the present is represented in some statements by Bishop Palmer of the Seattle Area. Bishop Palmer is among those bishops who have lamented the fact that the Church has not led in the battle for rights for Negroes. In a strong statement on this subject in 1965, he said the following,

> One of the greatest tragedies in contemporary Christendom is that so many are slowly and begrudgingly surrendering habits and practices of discrimination under constant pressure of government legislation and requirement, rather than in glad obedience to Christian conscience.
>
> What a pity, after all these years of preaching brotherhood and the supreme worth of the human soul, that it must be the government rather than the prompting of Christ which compels practice of what the Church has been preaching.
>
> It is a dark, dark day, indeed, when the government must serve in lieu of the Church as the conscience of society, when church-related institutions and church members yield reluctantly

> to the claims to racial justice and then only so far as compelled by civil law.[23]

His understanding of the issues surrounding race and his concern in changing the participation of the Church was evidence earlier in several stands taken. Thus, in July, 1963, at the time of the street demonstrations and conflict in Birmingham, Alabama, he denounced the violence used against demonstrators and bewailed the fact that churches turned away worshipers. Yet, after citing Birmingham, he immediately pointed the finger of judgment at the North and West in the following passages,

> The sin is not Birmingham's alone, nor is it restricted to the South. We of the North and West, likewise, stand condemned.
>
> It was in the state legislature of Washington this spring where legislation in support of fair housing was defeated. What shall we say of a town or towns in this state where the boast has been made, 'No Negroes permitted to reside here!' While grateful for progress in Seattle in support of full rights for all people, who would say we are entitled to point in condemnation of Birmingham?[24]

Certainly his was one of the few voices ready to castigate the North at this time. Moreover, he followed up this analysis with some firm support for open housing efforts in Washington.

In an effort to bring about open housing in Washington, Bishop Palmer issued a pastoral letter to Methodists of the Seattle Area declaring that open housing "is a fundamental, human right basic to a free society,"[25] gave his support to an interdenominational drive for fair housing by appointing a staff member to an organization formed by seven denominations,[26] issued a pastoral letter endorsing an open housing ordinance,[27] and participated as a leader in an open housing march in Seattle.[28] The open housing legislation was defeated in both Seattle and Tacoma, despite the efforts of the churches. After the defeat, Bishop Palmer renewed his expression of concern for open housing as part of the drive for "justice and freedom."[29]

---

[23] Statement made by Bishop Everett W. Palmer in a meeting with Church leaders on the National and World Level in respect of Church and Race, April, 1965. (Released by his office under that heading, no publisher indicated).

[24] Together Area News Edition (TANE), Seattle, Vol. 7, No. 7, July, 1963, p. A-3.

On two other occasions, Bishop Palmer issued statements related to support of specific actions. In the first, in June, 1964, he delivered an address to the Pacific Northwest Conference on the Quadrennial Program. Although that program, which called for various forms of unity and outlined study and action programs at various levels, was used throughout the Church, Bishop Palmer made it especially clear that he was concerned about the racial problem when he denounced discrimination in the following terms,

> 'We are called of God to the achievement of greater oneness across racial and cultural lines.' The Church must stand adamant against all attitudes and practices, no matter how long established

---

[25] Pastoral Letter, October 23, 1963.

[26] TANE, Seattle, Vol. 8, No. 2, February, 1964, p. A-1.

[27] The Seattle Times, Saturday, March 7, 1964, p. 2.

[28] TANE, Seattle, Vol. 8, No. 5, May, 1964, p. A-1.

[29] Ibid., p. A-4.

> or hallowed by custom, which deny justice or cause humiliation to any person for reason of his racial origin or nationality. Racial discrimination no more belongs in the 20th century than belief in witchcraft or trial by torture. It is a practice of bullies who serve their ego and accommodate their fears by inflicting humiliation and injustice upon those who cannot defend themselves. The Church must lead in the cause of civil rights as demanded by belief in God as Father, nor dare we as Christians rest content until the blight of racism is removed from our land and from our hearts.[30]

In the second statement, Bishop Palmer and his cabinet called for a day of penitence and prayer in all Methodist churches following the repression of civil rights workers in Selma, Alabama, in March, 1965.[31] The important thing is that the program urged upon the churches again related the events in the South to the "sins of discrimination" in the West, and, further, specified at least seven actions that might be taken to make the day most effective. Among these were invitations to ~~local officials to~~ local officials to participate, letters of support for legislation to congressmen and the President, and contributions to the Methodist Racial Witness Relief Fund.[32]

---

[30] "One Witness... One World!" Address to Pacific Northwest Annual Conference, June 14, 1964, p. 2 of reprint.

[31] Suggestions for "A Day of Penitence and Prayer for Freedom and Justice," sent to lay leaders and pastors from the Cabinet, March 12, 1965.

[32] In a study of the churches in Little Rock, Arkansas, at the time of the crisis over the schools in 1957, Campbell and Pettigrew found that one of the weaknesses of churches of the major denominations was the complete lack of follow-up to a one day prayer vigil. The pro-segregation forces, by contrast, organized a continuing program of action. See generally Ernest Q. Campbell and Thomas F. Pettigrew, Christians in Racial Crisis: A Study of Little Rock's Ministry, (Washington, D. C.: Public Affairs Press, 1959).

Bishop Raines of the Indiana Area is another bishop who has coupled analysis of the situation with support for action by the Church, although the actions supported have not been as specific as in the case of Bishop Palmer. In two particular instances he tried to interpret some of the techniques of the civil rights movement to the Church and suggested that the Church ought to support these actions. Thus, in an address to a Board of Missions dinner at the General Conference in 1964, he declared, "We should see clearly that the churches are not leading. We are being pushed by forces outside the church."[33] He suggested three things that the Church could do to help in the struggle for justice. First, "The Christian Church could perform a great service to the United States if it would help its citizens to understand the nature, purpose, usefulness and sound ways of judging the wisdom or folly of various kinds of demonstrations." Second, he called on the Church to exert influence to bring about passage of the Civil Rights Bill. He saw this as a crucial moment, as seen in the following,

> Today the Church -- our church -- faces once again a moment in history when it is called to decision.
>
> Our danger is that we will make our decision without considering all the facts. We are asking ourselves how can we take a step toward inclusiveness and at the same time save the unity of our church. Both of these considerations are pertinent. But they are, I fear, hiding from our vision an over riding question which we should face squarely, namely 'What does God in this moment of history expect of us as a witness to further His will.'

---

[33] "Methodist Mission and Race," delivered at Board of Missions Dinner at the 1964 General Conference, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, May 1, 1964, p. 7.

> Even in our self-examination we tend to be self-centered, concerned primarily for what happens to our institutions, or our states.
>
> The civil rights bill is before Congress. If the churches remain silent and exert no forth right (sic) influence to help adoption of this civil rights bill, the Negro people may well repudiate the non-violent leadership of religious men like Martin Luther King. The leaders of Congress tell us we of the churches have it in our power to make the difference; they ask -- they almost plead with us to speak.[34]

Third, within the Church, he called for a Constitutional Amendment that would eliminate the segregated structure of the Central Jurisdiction and a program that would eliminate segregation at the conference and local level. It is important to note that Bishop Raines saw the limitations of such actions in the Church. These might establish justice, but what is needed is reaching beyond justice to reconciliation. He put it thus,

> But so far we have only talked of justice, Now let us think for a moment of Christian fellowship born of being reconciled with God by Christ. Christ would not be content with waiting inside the church hoping no Negro would come, but determined to be polite if he was grateful to be admitted and didn't come too often. Christ would go out. . . . He went out to seek and bring back to the fellowship the estranged, the unreconciled. . . .[35]

Despite Bishop Raines' obvious commitment to the civil rights cause and his recommendations for the Church, his view of what decisive action in the Church would mean represents a very peculiar understanding of what is involved in inclusiveness. Generally, commentators favorable to change have seen either positive gains by whites and Negroes, or they have spoken of benefits for the separated Negroes. But, after warning against institutional protection and calling for support of the civil rights bill, Bishop Raines made the following statement,

---

[34] Ibid., pp. 6-7

[35] Ibid., p. 9.

> Therefore, we can make no sound decision at this General Conference which is based solely or largely on our estimate of how we can deal with the Central Jurisdiction, with the least amount of suffering to either Negro or white. We must face the fact that there will be suffering. The Negro will continue to suffer -- perhaps suffer more if we decide to abolish the Central Jurisdiction. The whites, too, will suffer and suffer more if we as a General Conference vote a constitutional amendment which if supported by the Annual Conferences would abolish the Central Jurisdiction.[36]

He does not go on to explain the suffering of whites, but the statement as it stands seems strangely out of place with the tenor of his other remarks. Concern has often been expressed about loss of Negro leadership and representation, as we have seen. This statement appears to make the move toward inclusiveness an unpleasant, but necessary, task, rather than an act required for justice and love. The only thing that whites in the Church stand to lose through elimination of The Central Jurisdiction is a segregated pattern, which has been judged against Church policy, and money necessary to establish minimum salaries and pensions in merged conferences.

Bishop Raines spoke out again in 1965 in a letter to Indiana Methodists in which he attempted to interpret and defend both demonstrations and civil disobedience. In supporting civil disobedience in exceptional situations, Bishop Raines said,

---

[36] _Ibid._, p. 7.

> But occasionally, as in the South, today there are state laws which deny constitutional rights of United States citizens. To disobey such laws publicly, with full willingness to pay the penalty of arrest and trial in order to make public opinion aware of injustice, may be demanded by the conscience of individuals or groups.[37]

Street demonstrations and civil disobedience have been two tactics of the civil rights movement that have consistently come under attack from whites, even those who basically agree with basic goals of the movement. Bishop Raines is one of two or three bishops that has come out strongly in defense of such tactics.

Bishop John Wesley Lord of the Washington, D. C., Area of the Church is another bishop who has defended demonstrations and civil disobedience. Of all the bishops, he has perhaps been the most active participant in street demonstrations. In his own Area, he has participated in demonstrations in Cambridge and Princess Anne, Maryland. In 1965, he participated in demonstrations in Selma, Alabama, following the attack by police on marchers attempting to go from Selma to Montgomery. After the latter demonstration, in response to some attacks and queries, Bishop Lord wrote an article entitled "In Defense of Demonstrations."[38] In that article he spoke about three issues over which there has been considerable controversy. First, he defended demonstrations on the ground of the right of assembly for protest, on the ground of practicality in achieving ends, because it is sanctioned by the General Conference, and because they prevent rather than encourage violence. Second, Bishop Lord defended civil disobedience, since one of the marches in which he participated had been in apparent violation of a federal injunction. He used the Discipline and good conscience as the basis for justifying this action. Finally, he responded to the charge that he was an outsider and in going to Selma had invaded another area of the Church. He based his answer on his understanding that "a Methodist bishop is specifically charged with responsibility for the 'spiritual and temporal affairs of the church,'" and said that in his view "the church" had no boundaries.

---

[37] TANE, Indiana, May, 1965, reprint of Bishop Raines' statement, no volume, number, or page listed.

[38] "In Defense of Demonstrations," by Bishop John Wesley Lord, reprinted from TOGETHER, August, 1965.

The question of the propriety or right of bishops to go, uninvited, to other areas of the Church is one of which there is not complete agreement. Bishops Goodsen and Mathews are two others who have spoken on this issue. Bishop Kenneth Goodsen, of the Birmingham Area commented publicly on Bishop Lord's visit to Alabama and on demonstrations following the Selma marches. On the specific issue of Bishop Lord's involvement, Bishop Goodsen said the following,

> I tried to reach him in Washington when the announcement was made of his coming. I tried to reach him in the Montgomery airport. I further tried to reach him through every known hotel and motel in Montgomery or Dallas County. I could not find him although we tried until the early morning hours. Bishop Lord did not contact me before he came, nor while he was here, nor since he left; nor did he contact any of our Methodist ministers in Selma.
>
> I know him well enough to know that he came in obedience to his own conscience. My conscience led me to think that he could have made a better contribution by staying out. I am sure that he has not changed his opinion; I know I have not changed mine.

On the general issue of demonstrations, Bishop Goodsen went on to say,

> Some day these demonstrations will be over and a saner procedure of change will be upon us. Then the great battle of reconciliation will be here. I must confess that I would rather be a part of the struggle for reconciliation than the other struggles that now seem to be not only losing their dignity but losing their purpose. . . . [39]

Bishop Goodsen's statements are important because they demonstrate an important area of conflict in thinking that still remains within the Church. A number of bishops, including Bishop Raines and Bishop Lord, have expressed the view that real change will not occur until reconciliation is established in the hearts of men. Bishops Raines and Lord, however, support the view that change in structures and the present situation is a necessary pre-condition to reconciliation. Bishop Goodsen represents the opposing point of view which maintains that demonstrations designed to expedite change only increase friction and thus make reconciliation more difficult. Both views are correct, or course, but the former recognizes the distinction between desegregation and integration and understands that the immediate goals of Negroes are more dependent upon desegregation than integration. [40]

---

[39] Letter from Bishop Kenneth Goodsen addressed to Alabama and West Florida Methodists, The Christian Advocate, March 23, 1965, p. 13.

[40] Desegregation refers to the removal of legal, economic, or customary barriers that have operated to prevent such things as equal access to public facilities, voting, and employment opportunities. Such barriers have been arbitrarily imposed by the white majority on the Negro minority in a pattern of segregation. Integration refers to relations between persons, such as friendship, respect, love, and sharing, that requires acceptance and understanding that cannot be legislated or required. Desegregation and integration are often confused or used synonymously in public debate. It is essential to maintain the distinction because different tactics are required to obtain each goal. It is also essential to keep in mind that both desegregation and integration must be achieved. Some bishops have overlooked the distinction and have argued for reconciliation leading to integration and against measures leading to desegregation. This understanding fails to grasp the nature of the problems faced and the necessary relation between desegregation and integration.

The question of "invasion by outsiders" and demonstrations was raised on another occasion when two bishops, Mathews and Golden, attempted to worship at a Methodist Church in Jackson, Mississippi, at Easter, 1964. This attempt followed a number of similar attempts by students at a local college and Methodist ministers from other parts of the country which failed to open the churches and resulted in several arrests.

Bishop Mathews wrote an account of the venture, entitled "Easter in Jackson," in which he recounted and defended the action.[41] Bishop Golden, A Negro, with responsibility for Central Jurisdiction churches in Mississippi, had invited Bishop Mathews to join him in worship at one of the Methodist churches in Jackson that was not "open." In his account, Bishop Mathews dealt lightly with the issue of demonstrations, by saying that they had not come to demonstrate, in the usual sense. He did say that the attempt to worship was a type of direct action. The main issue that Bishop Mathews dealt with was the question of the "invasion of outsiders." This was apparently due in part to the fact that critics said advance notice should have been given. Bishop Mathews said they had "been at pains not to inform anyone of their coming." In support of his action, he cited the violation of the policy of The Methodist Church on "open and inclusive" congregations, the declaration of support by the Council of Bishops for that policy, and the fact that Methodist bishops, as general superintendents, are responsible "for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the whole church."[42]

---

[41] "Easter in Jackson," by Bishop James K. Mathews, n. d.

[42] *Loc. cit.*

Beyond the issues of demonstrations and invasion of outsiders raised by the journeys to the South by Bishops Lord and Mathews is the interesting fact that in neither case was the local area bishop notified of their coming. Bishop Mathews avoided such notification deliberately, while Bishop Lord makes no comment on this matter. The lack of contact is important for us in our analysis of the role of bishops in the response of the Church to the problems related to race. The plain fact is that in two crucial situations in Church and society that transcended the geographical boundary lines of bishops' areas, for whatever reasons, Methodist bishops going to witness did not communicate with their colleagues with prime responsibility in the area. This points up the disparity of thought among bishops despite collective statements to which they have given their general, if not specific, approval. More than that, it demonstrates dramatically the great differences in principle and practice that exist in the Church despite statements which attest to the Church's devotion to inclusiveness in Church and society. It is interesting to note by contrast, that some of the ministers' delegations and a group of Methodist theological school professors that made trips to Jackson made special efforts to contact as many local Methodist leaders and ministers as possible.

In addition to the article defending demonstrations cited above, Bishop Lord has delivered at least two addresses dealing with prejudice and discrimination in the United States. These addresses are somewhat unique among the various statements made by bishops in that they do not deal with the problem in the Church nor attempt to exhort the hearer to support particular actions. Rather, in these two addresses Bishop Lord attempts to analyze basic problems in the conflict between racial groups. In the first of the two, entitled, "Handling the Conflict," which was delivered at a Human Relations Conference in Washington in 1964, Bishop Lord gives a sociological understanding of the sources of prejudice and a basically psychological understanding of possible solution.[43] In the second paper, entitled "Civil Rights and the American Negro," prepared after the encounter in Selma, Bishop Lord attempts to appraise methods of resolution of the civil rights struggle and some of the problems that lie ahead.[44]

In the latter paper, his major emphasis is on the task that lies beyond legislation. In his view, "the problem is not at heart a legal problem or a political problem, but a moral and spiritual problem."[46] The distinctive thing about this paper is that he tries to identify the problems facing both the majority and minority groups that will prevent legislative solution. He sees the necessity of the removal of fear on the part of whites and the restoration of dignity on the part of Negroes as basic to any resolution of the struggle between the races. Bishop Lord's understanding of the dynamics of group conflict is revealed in his conclusion where he points out that resolution of this particular conflict will raise other problems for society.

---

[43] "Handling the Conflict," address by Bishop John Wesley Lord, to the Human Relations Conference, Metropolitan Memorial Methodist Church, Washington, D. C., October 17, 1964.

[44] "Civil Rights and the American Negro," by Bishop John Wesley Lord, n. d.

[45] Ibid., p. 2.

Bishop Lord's statements do not contain new material or insight. They represent a distillation of generally acceptable sociological and psychological views. The important thing for us is that his three statements taken together comprise a thorough understanding of the problems involved and the variety of measures necessary to solution. The combination of the support of demonstrations, the appreciation of the necessity of legislation, and the understanding of the vast area that lies beyond legislation represents a fundamental grasp of the relation of desegregation and integration and the process of change. The importance of this total understanding is seen when it is contrasted with Bishop Goodsen's statement in which demonstrations were disavowed and reconciliation was affirmed. Bishop Lord appreciates the fact that neither demonstrations nor reconciliation is adequate to resolve the complex problems surrounding the relations between whites and Negroes, and that they must be included in a total strategy aimed at resolution. Bishop Lord's analysis, seen in these three papers, represents the most thorough analysis put forth by any bishop. The single gap in his analysis is in the area of specific steps to accomplish disparate goals in the various stages of resolution.

Bishops Lord, Palmer, and Raines are three bishops who have become centrally involved in problems related to race and have demonstrated their concern through interpretative statements, actions, and support of specific actions. They are not the only bishops who have been concerned about race. However, in many other cases, the concern has been limited to a narrower area, such as a generalized statement about particular issues or support of specific remedies. A survey of statements by other bishops reveals the variety of understanding that exists among bishops, the complexity of the problem that the Church faces with its wide geographic spread, and some of the internal disagreement on what the basic problems are and how best to solve them.

One of the most distinctive statements by any bishop was that of Bishop William T. Watkins in an article entitled, "Methodism's Present Task: A Southern View," which appeared in Motive magazine in 1961.[46] In the main, public statements by southern bishops have been limited to condemnation of violence on all sides, exhortation to obey all laws in difficult times, and expressions of hope that the Church might play an important role in reconciling the races. Bishop Watkins wrote as a southerner as well as a bishop, and his article is unique in that it excoriates the South for its blindness on the issue of race. Bishop Watkins stresses the centrality of the race issue when he says, "No issue in the world of today surpasses or even equals the race issue as a problem which must be solved."[47] Throughout he relates what is occurring in the United States to the upheaval taking place in the entire world and emphasizes that this is an entirely new situation. He then speaks of the blindness of the South and the isolation which this causes when he says,

---

[46] Bishop William T. Watkins, "Methodism's Present Task: A Southern View," Motive, March, 1961, pp. 39-43.

[47] Ibid., p. 39.

> Across the South there is the feeling that the present crisis is just the old problem turned up again, and that it will pass, as it always has. . . . We are dealing with something that is worldwide in extent and unmanageable in its force. . . . It is not an issue with the Southern white man on one side and the Southern Negro on the other. Rather, it is 'an idea whose time has come' with the Southern white man on the one side and almost the entire world on the other. (emphasis mine)[48]

Isolation, however, is not the only result of the southern attitude. He puts the issue in the strongest terms when he accuses the South of endangering the nation by its position, saying, "Certainly our Southern attitude on race creates a possible peril for this nation."

As a southerner, Bishop Watkins recognizes the force of loyalty to the South, and he addresses himself to this matter. His point is, simply, that loyalty to the South of today is loyalty to the outmoded forms of the past which grew out of an embittered people's response to the enforced passing of a way of life with defeat in the Civil War. His plea is that that way of life must be allowed to die and that loyalty must be directed towards a South of the future which is in tune with the world of today. He sees a role for the ministry in this redirection of attitude, and in the following passage makes an important relation between the response made and possible leadership of ministers on other issues,

> Certainly our Southern attitude on race creates a possible peril for this nation.
>
> Certainly the Southern people need to be more realistic and less emotional in this crisis, and we ministers of the South face a responsibility of leadership not faced by the Southern ministry in a hundred years. If we fail in leadership in this hour, if we do not utter the right words, if we deny the very essence of our religion

---

[48] Ibid., p. 40.

> by silence on this racial issue, then we need not rise to make remarks on other issues -- the world isn't going to listen to us. As ministers we make ourselves ludicrous if we proclaim the Fatherhood of God and leave off the brotherhood of man.[49]

This article by Bishop Watkins on the failure of the South to face up to the issue parallels the kind of appraisal made by Bishop Palmer on the failure of those in the North and the West to face up to discrimination existing in those parts of the country. There have been few instances in which the bishops have spoken out so forthrightly about failures within their own areas or sections of the nation. Another instance of forthright comment, this time directed at the practice of the Church, is contained in an address given by Bishop Alton of the Wisconsin Area to the annual convention of the National Association of Methodist Hospitals and Homes in 1964. In this address, Bishop Alton spoke first to the issue of the gap between principle and practice in the Church, saying,

> It seems to me quite clear that the official position of The Methodist Church regarding its ideal in the matter of human rights is a church that in all aspects of its life ministers to its people on the basis of their human need, and accepts them on the basis of their individual worth as persons without any kind of discrimination whatever based on race or national origin.
>
> In the matter of the standards by which the church operates, the determining factor is much more the mores of the community than the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as these are set forth in the idealistic statements of the church. Expediency is a much stronger influence than righteousness. Thus there is no one standard by which the church operates; rather, there are standards by which different expressions of the church operate in different locales and under different circumstances. The prevailing rule that has governed the practices of the church with regard to racial integration has been a moral version of the economic rule of supply

---

[49] Ibid., p. 40.

and demand -- that those who serve the public must supply services at the level of social acceptability which the public demands.[50]

Bishop Alton noted that the principles of the Church are not enforceable or legally binding, and he accepted the fact that the gap between principle and practice would continue to exist. The important thing is that he admonished hospital and home administrators for accepting what he called "a moral version of the economic rule of supply and demand" and called upon them to be "at the advance edge of the point where the standards that are considered acceptable to society reach out toward the ideals that beckon them."[51]

In this address Bishop Alton has touched upon one of the major problem areas in the Church in terms of its impact upon society. The question of the failure of Methodist institutions and agencies to live up to the standard of the Church has been raised often. The issue has been debated at the last two or three General Conferences, and each time the Conference has refused to take any restrictive action against any Methodist institution that failed to live up to the stated principle on race. As we have seen, in 1964, the General Conference authorized a study which has now been completed but which has not been released for public usage. The results of the study are to be presented to the General Conference of 1968 for study and possible action. Certainly the failure of The Methodist

---

[50] Bishop Ralph T. Alton, "Methodist Institutions and the Race Problem," Central Christian Advocate, 139:12, April 1, 1964, p. 12.

[51] *Loc. cit.*

Church to enforce its policy on inclusiveness within its own structures must severely limit the impact of its words when it calls upon society to change restrictive practices in employment, education, and housing.

The above represent some of the most important and distinctive statements by individual bishops. Other bishops have spoken out from time to time on various issues. Most of these relate to some practice or situation within the Church. There are also a few comments beyond those already cited on the general topic of demonstrations and civil disobedience. Although we shall not deal with any of these at any length, we shall note them to complete our picture of the kinds of problems related to race to which the bishops have spoken.

In 1963, Bishop Garrison of the Dakotas Area delivered an address entitled "American Christians and The Colored People" to the South Dakota Annual Conference. In this address he discussed discrimination and suggested several areas in which changes could be made. Two distinctive things were, (1) the relation of the discrimination of Negroes in the South to the contempt shown American Indians, thus bringing the problem home,[52] and (2) his very strong statement on the lack of leadership on the part of the church. He said,

> Spineless we have been! Spineless we are! Christians -- church members I am talking about, pastors and laymen. We scorn Germans who make excuse that they did not know what was happening to the Jews -- people who were sure their countrymen could

---

[52] Bishop Edwin R. Garrison, "American Christians and The Colored People," a sermon delivered at the South Dakota Annual Conference session, 1963, p. 2.

> never do this thing. Are you sure in 1963 that we Americans are any better? -- Sure that Negroes could not be the object of mass extermination?[53]

As we have seen, a number of bishops have made statements to the effect that the Church has lagged behind in an area where it ought to lead. The only exception to this matter, where anything was said at all, was found in a 1960 statement by the Southeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops who called such charges that the Church was far behind false propaganda.[54]

Several statements by bishops in the South indicate further the complexity there. A very interesting and frank comment on the rejection of one suggested measure and the support of another came from Bishop Harmon while resident bishop in the South Carolina Area. He said in a letter quoted in Plumb Line in 1963 that he didn't encourage Negroes to become members of white churches because they wouldn't be welcome. At the same time, he responded favorably to the suggestion that there be an exchange of ministers between the North and his area, and offered to try to arrange such transfer.[55]

A persistent problem in the South was emphasized in September, 1965, after people were barred from attending First Methodist Church in Americus, Georgia, by a statement on attendance by Bishop Smith of Atlanta, who said,

---

[53] Ibid., p. 8.

[54] Contact-Concern, Vol. 2:8, August 15, 1960.

[55] William C. Crouch, "Bishops and the Racial Question," Plumb Line, March, 1964, contains a letter from Bishop Harmon, dated December 6, 1963.

> I earnestly implore -- as I have before -- all of our churches to seat those who ask admittance to worship. We do not question motives for coming to the Father's house. Should visitors be accompanied by those who would give them publicity, let the picture made or the story written be of credit to America and the Christian Church, not a cancellation of what constitutes our greatness in the present world order.[56]

A problem that exists in Mississippi and Alabama was highlighted when Bishop Pendergrass and twleve district superintendents in Mississippi rejected a petition by the Mississippi Association of Methodist Ministers and Laymen. The petitioners endorsed a statement against support of the National Council of Churches and the use of Methodist publications to agitate the race problem. They represented less than four per cent of Mississippi Methodists and came from about ten per cent of the churches apart from the Central Jurisdiction.[57] One further statement from the South that may be noted was issued jointly by representatives of a number of denominations in Alabama, and signed by Bishops Harmon and Hardin of the Southeastern Jurisdiction. The 1963 statement foresaw desegregation in certain schools as the result of expected court decisions. Consequently, the religious leaders called upon citizens to "use only lawful means of expressing their desires. . . ."[58] Seven recommendations were affirmed, all having to do with law and order. Nothing at all was said about inclusiveness, brotherhood, or the necessity of working, even through law, for changes in existing patterns.

---

[56] Bishop John Owen Smith, "Americus Aftermath Urges No Racial Bars," Christian Advocate, September 23, 1965, p. 21.

[57] Christian Advocate, July 1, 1965, p. 24.

[58] "Bishops Join in Law and Order Plea," Central Christian Advocate, 138:20, March 15, 1963.

Several bishops have submitted addresses that they delivered at a conference or to conference representatives concerning merger with Central Jurisdiction conferences as the result of actions taken since the 1964 General Conference. Undoubtedly these are representative of many more such statements in the Northeastern, North Central, and South Central Jurisdictions where mergers have been widespread. Thus, in February, 1966, Bishop Frank of the Missouri Area addressed a letter to all Missouri members of the Central West Conference of the Central Jurisdiction following transfer of that conference to the South Central Jurisdiction. He wrote, in anticipation of the merger of conferences in Missouri, to welcome in the Central Jurisdiction members and to cite possibilities and problems. In particular he spoke about the possibilities of integrating some congregations, of "yoking" others by using a single minister for more than one congregation, and of the fact that some congregations, white and Negro, might wish to retain their identity.[59] The information on the mergers, consummated in June, 1966, indicated that sixty-five churches, ten thousand members, and forty ministers were transferred to Missouri Conferences.[60] This indicates that problems there are not acute, but the issues touched upon in Bishop Frank's letter are the kind of problems that face the Southeastern Jurisdiction in intensified fashion.

---

[59] Letter from Bishop Eugene M. Frank to former members of the Central West Annual Conference in Missouri, February 8, 1966.

[60] News release on conference mergers in Missouri, from Commission on Public Relations and Methodist Information, June 20, 1966.

Bishop Holloway spoke to leaders of the West Virginia Conference about approaching merger in an address on a variety of issues facing the Conference.[61] In that address, Bishop Holloway labeled the problem of race relations the most urgent facing society today and spoke of the fact that society is moving faster than the Church on the problem. His main concern was that there were people in the Conference not prepared for the change that was coming, and he was placing responsibility on them for creating awareness and readiness. He raised one of the central problems by asking, "How long will it be before we can assign minister irrespective of color?"[62] Although he expressed hope that the change would occur soon and emphasized its importance, no measures were suggested to accomplish this goal through actions of the bishop or cabinet. This remains one of the most serious problems in all parts of the country, and it emphasizes the extent to which The Methodist Church is congregation oriented despite its massive organization.

An interesting statement on the Church and race was made to the Western North Carolina Conference by Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr., in June, 1966. We have already seen that that conference had taken consistently forthright stands since the mid-1950's, although these very statements had indicated that Methodists in the conference were associated with the Ku Klux Klan which the Conference was denouncing. Bishop Hunt's statement demonstrates well the diversity of thought that exists among Conference members. The statement is an interesting combination of a call to positive action coupled with qualifications against moving too fast. This apparent effort to support change without offending anyone is seen most clearly in the following passage,

---

[61] Address by Bishop Fred G. Holloway to leaders of the West Virginia Conference at a special meeting called by the bishop, n. d., 13 pages.

[62] _Ibid._, p. 5.

> But other and additional efforts beyond the usual and the commonplace are likewise in order. It is to be assumed that Negro worshippers will be seated courteously and cordially in any and all of our Methodist churches at any time, a practice required by the law of The Methodist Church today and already prevalent in our Annual Conference. Perhaps some of our churches ought now carefully, wisely and creatively to follow the example already given by an heroic few of our Western North Carolina congregations and (in accordance with the philosophy and law of our Church) decide to welcome qualified Negro Christians into their membership--not ostentatiously, not in patterns of radical and zealous aggression, but quietly, gradually and in a humble, Christ-like way. And, in some of our inner-city situations, the hour may have come to consider the possibility of inter-racial experiments in certain church situations--on a voluntary basis and with vast carefulness. Parenthetically it may be stated that both of these projects have been begun already in one of the Methodist Conferences of the deep South, the Alabama-West Florida Conference, under the capable leadership of Bishop W. Kenneth Goodson. Let me emphasize that I am not suggesting a mass movement, and I am not calling for coercion in a delicate area; I am simply saying that a few pilot projects undertaken without publicity and with statesmanlike planning in prepared communities could help to serve at this particular moment in our history as beacon lights hopefully breaking up the gloom of fear and apprehension which still surrounds us.[63]

---

[63] "Perspectives on Western North Carolina Methodism," an address by Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr., delivered at Western North Carolina Conference, June 8, 1966, p. 3.

At this session, the Western North Carolina Conference voted to approve both Step I and Step II of the Plan of Action for Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction.[64]

These three statements from widely separated areas indicate that the situation today has not changed completely from that of the 1950's when the central problem was the creation of understanding among Negro and white Methodists. Although the annual conferences and bishops have moved beyond that stage in their own thinking, as represented by positions taken in the past two or three years, it is clear that this basic change has not yet occurred in the thinking of large numbers of the laity.

The Actions of the Bishops

The distinction between statement and action is often times an artificial one in that in certain situations a statement may be the strongest possible, and most useful, action available to a bishop. Nevertheless, in assessing the response of the bishops to the racial crisis, it is useful to catalog the types of actions taken by bishops in order to have a complete picture. We have noted that bishops' statements often go unreported. This is even more true in regard to actions, particularly those within the Church. Thus, a bishop, with his cabinet and other leaders, may arrange for a merger of white and Negro congregations or the appointment of a white or Negro minister across racial lines without any public statement ever being made. Often, in fact, an effort is made to ensure that such actions go unnoticed in the press. It must also be noted, however, that in a manner similar to conferences speaking without taking action, bishops often make statements unrelated to any specific actions.

---

[64] Letter from Bishop Earl G. Hunt of the Charlotte Area, June 27, 1966.

In order to try and present the broadest possible picture of the kinds of actions taken by bishops, a letter was sent to all of the active bishops in May, 1966, asking, in part, for indication of the types of actions they have taken in and out of the Church to help achieve the Church's goal of inclusiveness. Over fifty per cent of the bishops replied to the letters sent, and many of them specified particular actions taken. These responses provide the major source for this section of our analysis of the role played by the bishops in the Church's response to the racial crisis.

The reported actions of the bishops are relatively few and the information about these is meagre. We can only attempt to present a description of certain types of actions in order to construct a composite picture of the manner in which bishops have used their positions and authority in problem areas related to race. By far the great majority of reported actions were directed within the Church, and most of these concerned ministers, local churches, or meetings.

Several reports concerned specific actions taken in regard to individual ministers. Others reported efforts underway to appoint ministers across racial lines. Although there are undoubtedly many unreported similar incidents, these reports indicate the nature of problems encountered in this area. The assignment of ministers across racial lines has been a persistent problem for bishops. A number of annual conferences have adopted resolutions declaring their support of such episcopal action, but such appointments are still infrequently made. The local congregation to which the prospective minister would be appointed still has an effective veto power that may defeat the good intentions and efforts of the annual conference and bishop combined. Bishop Ensley, of the Ohio West Area, wrote in May, 1966, that he was going to attempt to appoint a Negro to a white church at the upcoming Conference, but that he was not sure what his success would be.[65] The depth of this problem and the time it will take to resolve it are seen in the following statement,

> One small thing that I have done this year is to send a letter of inquiry to every pastor and lay leader in the Area, asking if his church would be willing to take a qualified minister regardless of race. This did not receive much that was tangible in consequence. Most of the churches felt that they were not ready yet for a Negro pastor. But at least it did get the question before them and I believe that the ferments arising from it will eventuate in a fair break for our Negro brethren in the years ahead.[66]

Bishop Kearns of the Ohio East Area reported that in June, 1966, a white minister was appointed to a strong Negro church in Akron.[67] There seems to be less difficulty involved in this type of appointment than there is in the case of a Negro minister and a predominantly white congregation. Bishop Holloway reported somewhat more success in the use of the appointive power, in that he had appointed a Negro to the post of district superintendent and two white ministers to Negro churches. That not all problems have been solved may be seen in his statement, "we are hoping to assign a Negro pastor to an important white congregation in the session of 1967."[68] The complexity of the appointment of ministers across racial lines was revealed in Bishop Garrison's report of the appointment several years ago of a Negro as an associate minister in a Methodist Church at Mitchell, South Dakota. There are few Negroes in South Dakota and, although the family was well received, the sparse number of Negroes contributed directly to the termination of the Mitchell pastorate. In Bishop Garrison's words,

---

[65] Letter from Bishop F. Gerald Ensley of the Ohio West Area, May 24, 1966.

[66] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

[67] Letter from Bishop Francis E. Kearns of the Ohio East Area, August 3, 1966.

> A little less than a year ago, his wife indicated that they could not remain more than one more year because there were no other Negroes in the community and, since they had teenage children, she wanted her family to be where there would be more dating opportunities for the young people. Therefore, when the St. James Church situation opened in Chicago, we were able to arrange an appointment for him there. The local church gave a tremendous farewell reception to the family.[69]

Although the reluctance and resistance on the part of whites is undoubtedly responsible for continuing patterns of segregation in Church and community, long established traditions and customs affect Negroes as well as whites in terms of certain types of relations, particularly those which might lead to marriage. The South Dakota case may have been one in which dating efforts by Negro children had been rebuffed by whites. The important thing to note is that there are problems beyond the relation of the minister to his congregation that may prevent an appointment from being made or jeopardize it once it is made. Certainly this is similar to problems involved in the appointment of qualified ministers to inner-city situations, even when race is not a factor.

---

[68] Letter from Bishop Fred G. Holloway of the West Virginia Area, June 21, 1966.

[69] Letter from Bishop Edwin R. Garrison of the Dakotas Area, June 6, 1966.

Two different problems concerning ministers were met by Bishops Hardin and Raines. Bishop Hardin stated that he had made it known to the ministers in his area "that they will incur my strong disapproval if they allow anyone to be turned away from the church's services of worship." Such an incident did occur in South Carolina, and following a conference with the bishop, the minister withdrew from The Methodist Church.[70] The Director of Public Relations and Communication of the Indiana Area reported simply that Bishop Raines "has arranged for the transfer to Indiana churches of several Mississippi clergy who could no longer in good conscience serve segregationist churches in the South."[71] The first case reveals how the bishop's authority may be used to require support of the Church's position on open churches. Certainly this action would encourage other ministers in their efforts to break any pattern of exclusiveness. The second case reveals indirectly the plight of ministers in parts of the South. If a congregation is strongly segregationist the minister is presented with the choice of compromising his principle or leaving. The situation is not by any means unique.

---

[70] Letter from Bishop Paul Hardin, Jr., of the South Carolina Area, July 6, 1966.

[71] Letter from Robert L. Gildea, Director of Public Relations and Communications of the Indiana Area, July 7, 1966.

Three bishops reported on accomplishments in local church situations for which they are at least partially responsible. Bishop Slater of the San Antonio-Northwest Texas Area reported on a merger of a white and a Negro church and the appointment of two ministers, one white, one Negro, to the church. Although he gave credit to the district superintendents for the initiative, his necessary support was given.[72] Bishop Frank of the Missouri Area reported that since the merger of churches of the Central West Conference with the Missouri West Conference in June, 1966, five Negro congregations had joined with all white churches. Furthermore, he expected six to eight more to make a similar move in the near future.[73]

---

[72] Letter from Bishop O. Eugene Slater of the San Antonio-Northwest Texas Area, July 1, 1966.

[73] Letter from Bishop Eugene M. Frank of the Missouri Area, June 23, 1966. Bishop Frank called attention to one major problem related to mergers when he said, "There are invisible factors at work which a researcher may miss. There is no Negro laymen's movement. Laymen have been taught to be quiet. Pastoral Relations Committees are non-existent. A Bishop has appointed men regardless of their acceptance of the appointment or by the congregation. This has not been possible in the white churches for years. Negroes are utterly unable to understand why a pastor must be accepted by his congregation and they are terribly confused over the so-called 'power' of a Bishop. The Negro laymen are in revolt. They are demanding a voice and they will soon learn that the church really belongs to them." p. 2.

Bishop Pope of the Dallas-Fort Worth Area reported that two pastors appointed by him to "churches in racial transition" received Negro members into the congregation. He says that he is "appointing preachers especially to take care of inter-racial churches where this need arises."[74] These three reports, taken together, provide an interesting description of ways in which it is possible to bring about inclusiveness in a local church situation. Bishop Webb reported on a Larger Parish Program in East St. Louis made up of two Negro churches, three white churches, and a neighborhood house. Apparently the inclusiveness here derives from the sharing of the ministerial staff, although further types of co-operation and contact are included or envisioned.[75] These were not the only references to integrated situations, but they were the most detailed reports.

All of the above reports are signs that establishment of inclusive situations is occurring in a number of different ways geared to the local situation. Some of these methods would undoubtedly be applicable in other areas. In contrast to these signs of change Bishop Hardin related that he had had to initiate court action three times in order to prevent local churches from leaving The Methodist Church over the issue of race. One of these incidents occurred in Alabama, and the other two occurred in South Carolina.[76]

---

[74] Letter from Bishop Kenneth W. Pope of the Dallas-Fort Worth Area, June 30, 1966.

[75] Letter from Bishop Lance Webb of the Illinois Area, June 3, 1966.

[76] Hardin Letter, July 6, 1966, *op. cit.*

Another type of action taken by various bishops in conjunction with conference leaders to develop inclusiveness was the sponsorship of different kinds of meetings or conferences. Thus, it was reported that Bishop Raines was "the prime mover in six regional meetings of Methodist laymen over the three years to help interpret the goals, methods, and overall strategy of civil rights groups, and the official position of The Methodist Church on these issues."[77] Bishop Hardin reported that the South Carolina Conference had initiated integrated board meetings, workshops, conferences, and assemblies with the Central Jurisdiction conference in its area.[78] In a similar vein, Bishop Slater related that he and Bishop Moore of the Southwestern Area of the Central Jurisdiction had called a meeting in 1965 of pastors and laymen from both conferences, designed for worship, discussion and fellowship. He said, "It provided a rich opportunity for the development of understanding and an appreciation on the part of both groups."[79] This indicates that the change in situation since the late 1950's, when understanding was seen as the major need in preparation for later changes, has not yet affected all areas in the church. An ambitious program of integrated conference meetings was reported by Bishop Hunt of the Charlotte Area, including, "Integrated Leadership Training Schools, integrated Methodist Pastors'

---

[77] Gildea Letter, July 7, 1966, op. cit.

[78] Hardin Letter, July 6, 1966, op. cit.

[79] Slater Letter July 1, 1966, op. cit.

Associations, full integration (attendance and program) of important District and Conference-level meetings, full integration of all institutions owned or operated by The Methodist Church within my episcopal Area, and several churches with integrated memberships."[80]

We have already noted that the Detroit Conference has had one of the most consistently developed programs to deal with race of any of the conferences. In November, 1965, Bishop Loder convened a three day conference of ninety-eight leaders from the Detroit and Michigan Conferences on The Methodist Church and race.[81] Out of that conference came a plan of action to be undertaken by Michigan Methodists, which contained suggestions for long range analysis and action affecting all areas of the Church's life. Although the conference and the plan of action are the work of many people, the bishop's support for the conference and the implementation of the plan of action makes it much more likely that it will result in basic changes in the future. We noted earlier that Bishop Holloway of the West Virginia Area had addressed a meeting of conference leaders on crucial issues facing the Church and had labeled race the most urgent problem.[82] Although it is important to convene such meetings, the distinction between that type of meeting and the conference held in Michigan in terms of probable effectiveness is readily apparent. In Michigan, the conference was devoted to the single subject, race, and leaders discussed problems and worked out a plan of action. In West Virginia, Bishop Holloway spoke of several major problems facing the Church and no procedure was developed for resolving any of the issues he cited.

---

[80] Hunt Letter, June 27, 1966, op. cit.

[81] "To Pursue These Goals," a pamphlet containing a plan of action on race for Michigan Methodism growing out of a meeting held November 5-7, 1965, distributed throughout Michigan with a cover letter from Bishop Loder, n. d.

[82] Bishop Holloway's address to leaders of the West Virginia conference, op. cit.

In addition to actions dealing with ministers, local churches, and special meetings, individual bishops have done a variety of other things designed to carry out the Church's stated goal of inclusiveness. We have already discussed Bishop Mathews' trip to Jackson, Mississippi. Beyond that, he participated in a special all night vigil sponsored by Methodists for Church Renewal, an unofficial group in the Church, at the General Conference in Pittsburgh in 1964. The vigil was aimed at calling attention to segregation in the Church to encourage delegates to vote for an end to the Central Jurisdiction. In his own area, he has released one minister to work on housing problems, with a grant from the General Board of Missions in the Church. Another minister has been appointed the Chairman of the Boston Commission on Religion and Race, and Bishop Mathews provided funds for him to travel to Watts for the purpose of studying problems and causes for possible use in the Boston situation.[83]

---

[83] Interview with Bishop James K. Mathews, Boston, Massachusetts, December 10, 1965.

A very interesting illustration of the response of The Methodist Church as a national body is found in the response of the agency that controls the allotment of Church funds to a request from Bishop Raines. In its annual report the following one paragraph report is found,

> Commission on Religion and Race: Bishop Martin presented a request from Bishop Richard C. Raines for funds for the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches. On motion of Joseph T. Johnson, it was agreed that the Council can make no commitment, but will review the situation one year from now if there is a surplus in collections for the Interdenominational Co-operation Fund.[84]

What is not said there is that The Methodist Church, alone among all major member bodies of the National Council of Churches has refused to support the Commission on Religion and Race. Two agencies of the Church have on their own contributed $5,000 each in some years since the Commission was founded. However, other denominations have given up to $60,000 a year, and The Methodist Church, the largest of all member bodies, had been asked for $100,000. The paragraph from the report is interesting for us beyond the fact that the request was rejected. The motion cited there indicates that there will be a review if there is a "surplus in collections." This seems to be a strong indication that despite all proclamations about inclusiveness, the leaders who control the purse strings of the Church are unwilling to divert funds from business-as-usual programs despite the urgency of the problem cited in statements and resolutions by bishops and conferences.

---

[84] 25th Annual Report of the Council on World Service and Finance of The Methodist Church and Minutes of the Co-ordinating Council of The Methodist Church, 1964-65, n.p., p. 27.

Some other actions by the bishops directed within the Church include a document giving assurance of the support of Bishop Hunt and his cabinet to ministers of the Charlotte Area "for wise and careful implementation of the total Methodist attitude on matters related to race;"[85] service by Bishop Garrison on the Commission of 24 during the present quadrennium;[86] care not to appoint a district superintendent unsympathetic to the Methodist position on race;[87] the appointment of a minister to the board of an association seeking to build cooperative housing in a transition area;[88] working to eliminate questionable practices in Methodist institutions in an episcopal area;[89] working to get the DePauw University board of trustees to give financial assistance to fraternities and sororities which agree to integrate and then meet opposition from their national headquarters;[90] refusal to allow Methodist property to be used for private schools to avoid integration coupled with support for the public school system;[91] and joint services of baptism and ordination conducted by a bishop of the Central Jurisdiction and a bishop of the South Central Jurisdiction.[92]

---

[85] Hunt Letter, June 27, 1966, op. cit.

[86] Garrison Letter, June 6, 1966, op. cit.

[87] Hardin Letter, July 6, 1966, op. cit.; Pope Letter, June 30, 1966, op. cit.

[88] Webb Letter, June 3, 1966, op. cit.

[89] Gildea Letter, July 7, 1966, op. cit.

[90] Loc. cit.

[91] Hardin Letter, July 6, 1966, op. cit.

[92] Slater Letter, July 1, 1966, op. cit.

The actions of the bishops outside the Church, by their own account, have been minimal, and there is almost no mention of such action in Church periodicals. The bishops were asked in the letter sent to them for information on specific ways they have been involved in regard to racial problems in communities in their areas and for specific actions taken. An effort was made here to distinguish between participation in such things as human relations councils and protest demonstrations. Although considerable response was made in terms of statements on race and actions within the Church, the response on action outside the Church was slight. Furthermore, it was almost entirely centered on participation on some committee or council.

Thus, Bishop Nall of the Minnesota Area participated in a discussion on open housing and was a part of an interracial committee on Religion and Race;[93] Bishop Palmer of the Seattle Area was a member of a special Citizens' Advisory Committee for Equal Educational Opportunity, which served the Seattle Public Schools' Board of Education and made a number of recommendations concerning busing of students and new school construction, and is now a co-chairman of a Citizen's Committee trying to gain public support for a Board of Education desegregation plan;[94] Bishop Garrison of the Dakotas Area has served for three years as Chairman of the South Dakota Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights;[95] and Bishop Raines has served as vice-chairman of the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches.[96]

---

[93] Letter from Bishop T. Otto Nall of the Minnesota Area, May 31, 1966.

[94] Letter from Mrs. George W. Reis, Secretary to Bishop Palmer of the Seattle Area, May 25, 1966.

Several bishops have made a public witness other than participation on special committees. We have already mentioned Bishop Lord's involvement in demonstrations in the North and the South. Four Methodist bishops took part in the March on Washington in 1963.[97] Bishop Hunt of the Charlotte Area attended a protest meeting following the bombing of two homes of Negroes.[98] Bishop Webb participated in prayer services for integrated housing sponsored by the Council of Churches of Springfield, Illinois.[99] In addition to these activities, a number of bishops have signed statements representing interfaith support for legislation or calling for an end to some specific form of discrimination in their local area.[100]

---

[95] Garrison Letter, June 6, 1966. op. cit.

[96] Gildea Letter, July 7, 1966, op. cit.

[97] "Where were Methodists at the March?" by H. Kiely, Concern 5:12 October 15, 1963.

[98] Hunt Letter, June 27, 1966, op. cit.

[99] Webb Letter, June 3, 1966, op. cit.

[100] e. g. TANE, Kansas, 8:4, June 1964 reports that a Methodist bishop was among an interfaith group of leaders who signed a statement urging civil rights legislation. We have already noted that Bishops Harmon and Hardin joined other religious leaders in Alabama in a plea for law and order in 1963.

One of the most significant actions by any body in the Church in terms of what it symbolizes and its potential impact is the participation by the Detroit Conference in the Project Equality program.[101] Participation in the project was adopted in June, 1965. In March, 1966, Bishop Loder sent a letter to all pastors and administrators of Methodist agencies supporting Project Equality and requesting that compliance forms be sent to each supplier.[102] This was later followed by letters to all leaders by the Board of Christian Social Concerns in which Bishop Loder was used as authority.

Although there have undoubtedly been numerous other instances of action by bishops in relation to particular local issues, it is clear both from the periodicals and from the bishops' letters that there are far fewer actions taken outside the Church than within its framework. Since the bishops are the recognized leaders of the Church in their respective areas, the limited public witness in matters outside the Church may severely circumscribe the effectiveness of the Church in determining the resolution of any particular problem. Furthermore, it may cast serious doubt upon the commitment of the Church to its own stated goal of inclusiveness in Church and society. Non-action may be taken as either neutrality or support for the existing situation. By far the most important effect of a bishop's action or non-action may be the interpretation put upon his response by individual ministers when they are considering their own course of action.

---

[101] Journal of the Detroit Conference, 1965, pp. 491-492. See Chapter V, above.

[102] Letter from Bishop Dwight E. Loder of the Michigan Area to all Pastors and Administrators of Agencies in the Detroit Conference, March 31, 1966.

The Collective Response of the Bishops

The bishops speak collectively as well as individually, and our analysis would be incomplete without some comment on the collective role of the bishops. One manifestation of their collective voice is the Episcopal Address delivered at General Conference. Every four years the bishops select one of their number to compose the Episcopal Address which is a "state of the Church" statement to the Church at large. Drafts are sent to each of the bishops for critical comment and approval, and, in principle, the final address represents the thinking of all of the bishops. In addition to the Episcopal Addresses, the bishops speak collectively through the Council of Bishops in special statements on issues confronting the Church.

We have already discussed the viewpoints on race presented in the Episcopal Addresses in the chapter on the dispute over the Central Jurisdiction. We may briefly review what was said in the General Conferences from 1944 to 1964. In 1944, the Episcopal Address spoke at length about the depth of the problem of race and emphasized its worldwide manifestations. In their analysis of what was needed to meet the problem, the bishops said,

> .... Discerning men recognize, however, that the real problems of our time are more than racial, political or economic, they are spiritual. The thoughtful Christian readily perceives that the redemption of the individual member of society, or of the entire social order, will not be achieved by the readjustment of institutions alone, but by the regeneration of the human heart.... The healing of the world's woes may be hastened by the development of worthy social programs, by orderly and progressive improvements in government, but its complete cure waites (sic) for the full acceptance of Christ's teaching concerning human relationships.... [103]

We have already noted the importance of combining social change and reconciliation to accomplish desegregation and integration. Although the bishops include both factors in their analysis, and although they go on to grant that progress in the Church has been slow, they fail to posit or support measures designed to bring about change. Too often in the period since 1944, the Church has stressed regeneration of the human heart at the expense of change of social institutions.

The next important statement on race in an Episcopal Address occurred in 1952. In that year, the Address included a statement which has since often been quoted as the basic position of the Church. The central understanding is found in these words,

> To discriminate against a person solely upon the basis of his race is both unfair and unchristian. Every child of God is entitled to that place in society which he has won by his industry, his integrity, and his character. To deny him that position of honor because of the accident of his birth is neither honest democracy nor good religion.... [104]

---

[103] Journal of the General Conference, 1944, op. cit., p. 175.

[104] Journal of the General Conference, 1952, op. cit., p. 167.

In 1956 the Address reiterated the position taken in 1952, and attention was then directed to the difficulties involved in resolving problems faced. The emphasis on the quest for avenues toward resolution, which was seen as well in our discussion of the Interracial Conferences held in the 1950's, is revealed in the following passage from the Episcopal Address,

> ... The principle is no longer debatable. The sole question centers in a procedure which will preserve the good while eliminating the bad. No man at present is wise enough to chart the course the Church should take with completeness and precision. There are no perfect answers and no 'either-or' alternatives; no iron-clad attitudes and no cure-all prescriptions to which we can turn for a quick solution of the problem.[105]

The Conference passed Amendment IX and established the Commission of 70, but it gave no guidance on procedures to be followed by the Church in confronting problems in society.

In 1960 the strong position of 1952 was again reiterated and the bishops said that the problem now was, "not a new pronouncement but to bring our actions in line with our professions."[106] The only action taken, however, was the approval of the Report of the Commission of 70 supporting utilization of the voluntary procedure under Amendment IX and the establishment of the Commission of 36.

In 1964 the overriding issue at the General Conference was the course of action to be taken on the Central Jurisdiction. The Episcopal Address contained only one short statement on race. In that statement, the bishops supported the past position of the Church and declared that prejudice on account of color is a sin, declared the necessity of support for any minister who proclaims the fundamental doctrine of the Church, and called upon the General Conference to remove any mark of racial segregation from the Church.[107] The inclusion of the matter of support for ministers and the plea for removal of segregation in the Church points up two major problems still present in the Church in 1964. The first of these is particularly interesting in that in letters in response to the questionnaire many bishops spoke of the support being given by bishop and cabinet to ministers taking a progressive stance in line with the Church's fundamental position.

---

[105] Journal of the General Conference, 1956, op. cit., pp. 221-222.

[106] Journal of the General Conference, 1960, op. cit., p. 205.

In addition to the portions of the Episcopal Addresses dealing with race, the bishops have made major statements on the issue on two other occasions. In the first statement they came out in support of the 1954 Supreme Court's school decision. We have already noted pleas for law and order issued by a number of bishops in the South following the school decision. The statement by the Council of Bishops widens the base of support. However, it is also another indication of the leadership exercised by agencies outside the Church, a situation bewailed by some Church leaders. In November, 1963, the Council of Bishops issued another statement on race that bears more attention in that it speaks directly to several major problems in the Church as well as to the whole problem of demonstrations confronting the nation at that time. Because of the problems it points up and because it represents the single public statement by the Council dealing wholly with race, the statement bears quotation in full.

---

[107] Daily Christian Advocate, 1964, op. cit., p. 15.

Statement of the Council of Bishops of The Methodist Church
Adopted November 13, 1963, Detroit, Michigan

> The Methodist Church stands for the equal rights of all racial, cultural, and religious groups. We confess with deep penitence that our performance as a church has not kept pace with our profession. The right to choose a place of residence, to enter a school, to secure employment, to vote or to join a church, should in no way be limited by a person's race or culture.
>
> The Methodist Church must build and demonstrate within its own organization and program a Fellowship without racial barriers. The church must also work to change those community patterns in which racial segregation appears, including education, housing, voting, employment and the use of public facilities. To insist that restaurants, schools, business establishments, and hotels provide equal accommodations for all peoples without regard to race or color, but to exempt the church from the same requirements is to be guilty of absurdity as well as sin.
>
> We urge our pastors upon whom rests the responsibility of receiving persons into the church, to receive all who are qualified and who desire to be received without regard to race, color or national origin, and we individually and collectively pledge them our support as they do so. The Methodist Church is an inclusive church.
>
> We decry, on legal as well as Christian grounds, the denial to any person of any color or race the right of membership or the right to worship in any Methodist Church. Further, to move to arrest any persons attempting to worship is to us an outrage.
>
> We call upon all Methodist institutions where such has not been done, to bring their racial policies and practices in line with the Christian principles of racial inclusiveness to which we are committed.
>
> We affirm the legality and right of those minorities who are oppressed anywhere in the world, to protest, to assemble in public, and to agitate "for the redress of grievances," provided this is done in an orderly way. A public march as a vast petition for attention and justice is in line with the principles on which this nation was founded. The recent march in Washington provided a spectacular and well-directed move of this kind.

> We note with satisfaction the increasing appreciation in our land and over the world of a growing spirit of justice and good will which in time will enable our people, both as churchmen and as citizens, to resolve unbrotherly tensions. Much has been accomplished and much more will be accomplished as the months go by. Constructive, if unnoticed, work has been going on over our whole land and our church has been among the foremost in calling for brotherhood and justice, and for an end to long entrenched evil. We rejoice that in community after community, city after city, state after state, good will and good laws have moved ahead with men and women of good intent working well together.
>
> We call upon all of our pastors and members, and the people of our land and of all lands, to so speak and so live as to deepen by word and deed the brotherhood of man and make this a reality instead of a hope.[108]

Especially notable for our analysis are the passages on admission to worship and church membership and the call to Methodist institutions to bring policies and practices in line with principle. We see in the response to the bishops' plea an interesting indication of their authority and influence. We have already noted that at the 1964 General Conference an attempt was made to withhold Church funds from Methodist institutions whose policies and practices were not consonant with the position of the Church. This action was not taken. In its stead, the General Conference authorized a study of Methodist institutions. It is interesting to note that this internal problem had been cited by various annual conferences and in General Conference sessions for over a decade. We shall comment later at greater length about the effectiveness of the voice of the Council of Bishops in giving lead to the Church and speaking for the Church. The lack of action in response to the bishops' plea indicates the autonomy of some Church institutions as well as the limited weight of the bishops' voice. The bishops all serve on Church boards. One question asked them in the questionnaire sent to them concerned actions they had taken to bring board and agency policies in line with Methodist policy. The small proportion who did respond to this question indicated that they know of no problems. In no case did a bishop indicate that he had used his position on a board to improve or resolve problems. The 1963 statement clearly indicates that such problems exist. The lack of any response by the bishops to this question, when compared to their statements and actions on other issues, raises further question about their effective authority in the Church structure.

---

[108] Statement of the Council of Bishops of The Methodist Church, Adopted November 13, 1963, Detroit Michigan, mimeographed.

The statement of the Council of Bishops was issued on November 13, 1963, and the two paragraphs dealing with the right to worship and membership indicates that this was a serious problem in the Church. In conjunction with our discussion of Bishop Mathew's trip to Jackson, Mississippi, we mentioned that local college students and Methodist ministers from throughout the country had failed to enter Jackson Methodist churches on an integrated basis. Furthermore, many of them were arrested. Bishops Mathews and Golden were also refused entrance to a Jackson Church at Easter, 1964. In November, 1965, two years after the statement by the Council of Bishops, Bishop Kennedy of the Los Angeles Area spoke to integrated congregations during a four day speaking engagement. The Christian Advocate carried an article on this entitled, "Jackson

Mississippi Church Breaks Color Bar."[109] The event was heralded as a major breakthrough and a change in policy and practice. However, a letter to the editor of the Christian Century qualifies severely the effectiveness of Bishop Kennedy's breakthrough. The letter, written by a Negro woman who was formerly a member of the General Board of Education and the General Board of Christian Social Concerns, states that in the writer's view certain "acceptable Negro worshipers" were admitted to Bishop Kennedy's services while others, including the writer, were turned away. Furthermore, and more important, she says that on the Sunday following Bishop Kennedy's departure "Galloway was as tightly closed as ever; Negroes were again turned away from its worship services."[110] We have commented before about the problem of autonomy of the local church in The Methodist Church. The combined weight of the Council of Bishops, a visitation by two bishops, and Bishop Kennedy's personal appearance before integrated congregations was not sufficient to change patterns in a local church. The Methodist Discipline, of course, has strong passages making it quite clear that there are to be no racial bars to worship or membership. These can be ignored by the local church with apparent impunity. No reply was recieved from the bishop in Mississippi to the queries sent to all bishops.

---

[109] Christian Advocate, November 18, 1965, p. 21.

[110] Christian Century, Vol. LXXXII, Number 51, (December 22, 1965), Letter to the Editor by Mrs. Martin L. Harvey, p. 1582. One further footnote to the Jackson situation is provided by the news that after five Negroes were turned away from the Galloway Memorial Methodist Church on June 9, 1963, the pastor of eighteen years, Dr. W. B. Selah, and his assistant resigned. News Release, Nashville, Tenn., n. d., in files of Woman's Division of Christian Service, New York, N. Y.

The two matters commented on here would be slender material on which to build any interpretation of the authority and influence of the bishops acting collectively through the Council of Bishops. We may note, however, that the Council's statement of 1963 did isolate the problems we have discussed. Furthermore, our discussion merely points to a much deeper problem related to the collective leadership of the bishops. In 1963, an official study of the Episcopacy in The Methodist Church was completed. In Part IV, entitled, "The Episcopacy in The Present Day",[111] the question of the collective leadership of the bishops is fully discussed and it is seen to be quite circumscribed. This part of the study is based almost entirely on long interviews conducted by its author, Murray H. Leiffer, with every active bishop in the Church, as well as some retired bishops.

In the study, Leiffer discussed a number of factors that tend to limit leadership by the bishops, even in their own areas. One limiting factor has been the election of bishops by jurisdictions.

> He has tended to be more localized in influence and therefore to become in some respects subordinate in the national life of the Church to the general secretaries who also are administra-

---

[111] Murray H. Leiffer, "The Episcopacy in the Present Day," Part IV, "The Study of the General Superintendency of The Methodist Church," prepared for the Co-ordinating Council of The Methodist Church, mimeographed, August, 1963.

> tors but are not tied to a jurisdiction or, even more narrowly, to an episcopal area. That is, the office of bishop has lost some of its status.[112]

A further restriction on the bishops is the quadrennial program of the General Conference which tends to standardize episcopal activity and increase the administrative nature of the office.[113] Further, the time requirements for administrative and organizational activities and weekly preaching engagements minimizes possibilities for community leadership.[114] In terms of the individual bishops and their contacts in the wider community, Leiffer says, "On the whole, one would need to conclude that Methodist bishops have relatively few leadership contacts and assume few responsibilities beyond the bounds of the church and its affiliated agencies. . . ."[115]

This part of Leiffer's analysis is directed to the problem of the leadership of individual bishops. However, the restrictions he has cited relate directly to our present discussion of the collective role of the bishops. Their own assessment of the collective role is valuable at this point. In a chapter on the Council of Bishops and under the heading of "Broader Leadership Responsibilities of the Council," Leiffer reported that, "The large majority of bishops replied negatively to the question, 'Does the Council of Bishops as an entity offer comparable leadership for the total church that individual bishops do in their respective areas?'"[116]

---

[112] Ibid., p. 46.

[113] Ibid., p. 48.

[114] Ibid., p. 57.

[115] Ibid., p. 94.

[116] Ibid., p. 138.

He went on to say that the bishops recognized more need for leadership in the Church during the Quadrennium. What is most important, they felt that the Council of Bishops ought to exercise such leadership, and, furthermore, they felt that the bishops have the authority and power to exercise leadership through the Council if they would use it. However, too much time spent in individual areas mitigates against any effective leadership by the Council.[117] Leiffer's own analysis of the situation was that three factors, the priority of the General Conference as the voice of the Church, local duties, and lack of consensus on major issues mitigate against strong action by the Church.[118] One of his conclusions was that the Church as a whole does not have a head between General Conferences, rather, it has only a number of areas and agencies.[119]

Certainly that conclusion is sustained on the matter of race, especially as it applies to the bishops. Beyond the two special statements made by the Council, there was no collective action by the bishops. Yet, the bishops themselves felt that they had the power to lead during the quadrennium if they would use it. The lack of leadership from the bishops has been particularly apparent in terms of support for particular forms of action or legislation. There have been no statements about legislation at the times national debates were taking place, no mention of support for employers who maintained an open hiring policy, no directive concerning open housing, and absolutely no indication of the willingness to use the Church's financial power to support its stated interest in inclusiveness.[120] One bishop reported that the Council of Bishops has not even discussed the possibility of making a statement on such issues as housing, open employment, or inferior quality of education in ghetto schools.[121] There is a conflict between the view that the bishops have, and should use, the power to lead and the fact that they have not exercised this leadership beyond two statements in ten years on the issue of race. The bishops were asked to comment on the role of the Council of Bishops in the questionnaires sent to them. Very few responded to this particular question, and these responses were quite general. Bishop Short reported that since the last General Conference, "the Council of Bishops has devoted long hours to consideration of the current situation and the Council has a Committee of Seven taking leadership in this matter."[122] He went on to say that the committee had not yet reported its findings to the Council, and that it was holding them in abeyance until other action in the Church had been completed.

---

[117] Ibid., p. 138. [118] Ibid., p. 139.

[119] Ibid., p. 176.

---

[120] We may again note here the example of the Detroit Conference in its support of Project Equality. The Methodist Church does immense spending through its national agencies and adoption of a program like Project Equality at the national level could have considerable impact. The bishops could also have called on Methodists in business to undertake like projects in their firms and industries.

[121] Mathews interview, op. cit.

[122] Letter from Bishop Roy H. Short, Louisville Area, June 3, 1966.

Evaluation of the Response of the Bishops

As we stated at the outset of this Chapter, the bishops are the chief executives of The Methodist Church within the episcopal areas to which they are assigned. The episcopal areas usually contain one or two annual conferences, and it is at the annual conference level of the Church that the authority of a bishop is most determinative of positions formulated and actions taken.[123] We noted previously that the analysis of the annual conferences reveals something about the thinking and leadership role of the bishops having authority in those conferences. Our assessment in this chapter is intended to provide additional insight into the shaping of the Methodist response to the present racial crisis and into the nature of that response. To some extent, Methodism is identified with the leaders in any given area, and the bishops serve as symbols of the Church in the wider community.

Our analysis of the responses of the bishops revealed the following:

(1) As in the case of the annual conferences, the bishops were greatly affected by events in the nation related to civil rights. The pre-

---

[123] The bishops also serve on the general boards of the Church. Our study did not reveal the extent to which the bishops have been responsible for the shaping of the responses of the boards and agencies. No bishop contributed such information and such information is not available in printed form. Without the assistance of the bishops, such information could only be obtained through intensive interviewing of board and agency personnel, if they were willing to comment publicly. Since such interviews were not undertaken, and since the bishops did not volunteer this information, we shall have to limit ourselves to the observation that participation in board policy formulation is part of the bishop's task.

dominant thought exhibited by the bishops in the Interracial Leadership Conferences of the 1950's was that it was necessary to develop a climate of understanding between racial groups. The emphasis on "getting to know one another" indicates the state of thinking and relations existing in the Church at that time. It will be recalled that one major problem cited was how to keep Methodist church buildings in the hands of Methodists. Today the emphasis is on how to integrate people in changing situations and yoke white and Negro congregations in more stable situations. The ten areas of change between the 1950's and 1960's are strong indications of the impact of contemporary events on the Church. We should note well that Bishops Raines and Palmer, both of whom demonstrated forthright leadership, bewailed the fact that forces outside the Church were determining the course of events.

(2) In another parallel to an earlier part of our study, we discovered that Negro bishops were divided among themselves about how to proceed. The plainly stated concern in the 1950's for loss of Church leadership positions highlighted again one of the most difficult problems the Church faced at that time in attempting to change. We saw in Chapter IV, which covered the dispute over the Central Jurisdiction, that it has only been in the 1960's that Negro leaders have taken a unified public stand on willingness to risk their positions to gain inclusiveness within the Church. The importance of the dissension in the 1950's for our study is that it reveals that it has not only been obstinacy on the part of whites that has balked progress toward integration.

(3) We should also recall that Bishop Clair of the Central Jurisdiction supported the Church's historic approach to relations between the races as providing both an opportunity for participation of Negroes in a predominantly white denomination and a foundation for later movement toward inclusiveness. This again demonstrates that not all Negro leaders have been critical of the Church's position. It also gives support to those persons who have argued that The Methodist Church has been ahead of other Protestant denominations in bringing the races together. Ambivalence on the part of Negroes in the Church is seen in the fact that even though they did not support the Plan of Union they have supported the existing situation in preference to secession.

(4) One of the most important things revealed by our study of the bishops was the lack of communication between bishops when confrontations occurred on segregation patterns in the South in the Church and in the society. When Bishop Lord went to Selma, Alabama, and when Bishop Mathews went to Jackson, Mississippi, there was no contact with the bishops in those areas at any time. Certainly these situations strengthen the finding in the Leiffer study that the collective leadership of the bishops is minimal and that the Church is fragmented into areas and agencies in the interims between General Conference sessions.

(5) There is an obvious disparity between the conception of different bishops on appropriate action. Northern bishops made forthright statements, specified changes to be made, and, in some instances, participated in public demonstrations. Southern bishops tended to speak of

reconciliation and support for law and order. As in the case of the annual conferences, we must take note of the cultural differences which contribute to different understandings and which affect the possible range of action of any bishop. The bishops are elected by the separate jurisdictions and tend to represent the mode of thinking of geographical regions. Furthermore, southern bishops, responsible for the totality of the ongoing life of the Church in the South as well as for the response to race problems, are subject to pressures that do not impinge on northern bishops. Their range of possible action is much more circumscribed if they are to fulfill their total responsibility. In addition, as southerners, they inherit the traditional southern Methodist view on regional autonomy and the place of Negroes in the Church. Nevertheless, it must be asked whether they have supported as fully as possible the position of the Church on inclusiveness through the utilization of the authority available to them. The same question, of course, must be asked about northern bishops who do not operate under the same constraints.

(6) Two bishops, Palmer and Watkins, were especially forthright in pointing their fingers at problems within their own episcopal areas. Bishop Palmer used events in the South, which were the occasion for much northern self-righteousness, to call attention to basic problems in the Seattle Area. Bishop Watkins, a southerner, strongly attacked the traditional southern position on the race relations. Both of these examples represent the kind of leadership that a bishop may give in calling the Church to recognize its responsibilities in standing over against

the society and its values. This is important for the discussion of the problem of the Church and social action in terms of the traditional dichotomy between Church and "world."

(7) Most of the statements and most of the actions were directed to problems in the Church rather than in society. This parallels what was seen in the analysis of the annual conferences. It also supports Leiffer's conclusion that bishops tended to be insulated from problems outside the Church. Recognizing this inwardness of focus is important in assessing the leadership role of the Church in the society. The Methodist Church, along with other denominations, maintains that it has an important responsibility to participate in the determination of events and the shaping of our culture. Presumably, the statement of responsibility is sincerely made. Moreover, it appears to be widely believed that the impact of the Church on society is great. Our study indicates that there needs to be a reappraisal either of the responsibility or of the strategies.

(8) The collective response of the bishops has been limited to one or two basic statements and Episcopal Addresses. Clearly, in the light of our study and Leiffer's findings, the role of the Council of Bishops needs to be reconsidered. This is especially evident in the light of the fact that Leiffer discovered that the majority of bishops felt that the Council of Bishops ought to take a more decisive leadership role in the Church, had the authority, and was failing to exercise that authority.

The above observations are particularly important for our assessment of the Church and social action. In statements cited in our study and in the Leiffer study, bishops are aware of the fact that the Church is not exercising leadership in many areas and they are aware that they are not performing the leadership role that they could within the Church. The Methodist Church does not have any single executive responsible to the entire Church. The President of the Council of Bishops is elected for an annual term only and has no real power to speak for the bishops or direct the Church. There is a recognized void in denominational leadership that needs to be filled. There are strong indications that the leadership potential of the bishops in individual episcopal areas is not being fully utilized. Leiffer found that there was little involvement in the life of the community beyond the Church. Very few of the bishops responding to our inquiries indicated participation in community affairs. We cited some instances in which bishops served on committees dealing with community problems. However, in only a few cases were there indications of strong leadership beyond the Church. Those instances attest to the potential leadership that resides in the office of bishop. Thus, both the individual and collective leadership roles of the bishops need to be reconsidered.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RESPONSE OF THE BOARDS AND AGENCIES

The responsibility for the implementation of Methodist policy resides finally with every local congregation and with every member of The Methodist Church. However, from its earliest days, The Methodist Church has been hierarchically structured so as to put prime responsibility for legislation and policy in the General Conference. The General Conference, however, meets only once in four years, and there is an elaborate structure provided for carrying on the work of the Church during each quadrennium. The three most important segments of the hierarchy are annual conferences, the bishops, and the boards and agencies of the Church. We have already indicated that the jurisdictional conference is an effective structure only in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, the Central Jurisdiction, and, to a lesser degree, the South Central Jurisdiction. The latter has necessarily entered importantly into our study. Since jurisdictional structures do not function throughout the entire Church, we have only mentioned a small number of specific actions which have affected the issue of Church and race.

We have already analyzed the way in which the annual conferences and the bishops have functioned to implement the policy of the Church on race as set down by the General Conference. In this chapter we come to analyze the response of the third major component of the Church hierarchy, the boards and agencies of the Church. Although the conferences, the bishops, and the boards and agencies have distinct responsibilities and authority, they are integrally related. The annual conferences provide the funds with which the boards and agencies carry out their tasks, and, in turn, the conferences utilize the specialized services of the boards and agencies in carrying out their own functions. The bishops serve as a bridge between the annual conferences and the boards and agencies in that they are the chief administrative officers of the annual conferences and serve on the governing boards of the disparate boards and agencies. It is well to bear this integral relation in mind as we turn our focus on the boards and agencies.

In the introductory page of the chapter on the annual conferences, we said, "...the responsibility for carrying out the policies and programs falls on the annual conferences and national boards and agencies. The boards and agencies are of central importance because they control and expend tremendous sums of money, publish and distribute hundreds of pieces of literature, and take prime responsibility for unified Methodist witness in every area...."[1] The importance of the boards and agencies for our study, both in terms of their function and of their impact on the total Methodist response to any problem, may be seen in the following passage from an analysis of the structure of The Methodist Church by Bishop Nolan B. Harmon,

---

[1] *Supra*, p. 216.

> The boards are the continuing, permanent agencies of the church in putting into effect the church's program. Through their executives and employed personnel the boards are in continual session, as it were. Conferences adjourn, bishops scatter to superintend their respective areas, the Judicial Council is in session only at General Conference or at such times as there is appelate grist for its judicial mill. But the boards of the church, from their nature and duty, must continually function through their officials and elected agents -- and they do it ceaselessly. . . . The boards of the church mediate and make continually effective the power of the church as this is to be applied to local situations.[2]

Bishop Harmon goes on to point out that effective operation of the boards is dependent upon their elected and employed personnel, and he stresses the importance of the continuation in office of persons serving acceptably. "According to the custom, which has become Methodist common law, church officials are usually re-elected from time to time to the position each one holds, unless either such a person withdraws or asks leave to withdraw, or unless there is active opposition to such a person's continuance."[3] The importance of the operation of "Methodist common law" to our study is readily apparent. On the one hand, it ensures continuity, efficiency, and effectiveness. On the other hand, as Bishop Harmon points out, it leads to increasing introversion, specialization, and isolation of each board from other parts of the work of the Church. Bishop Harmon notes both the advantages in terms of experience and the disadvantages in the development of an "ecclesiastical bureacracy" resulting in divisiveness within the Church.[4]

---

[2] Nolan B. Harmon, The Organization of The Methodist Church, (2nd Rev. Ed.; Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1962), p. 218.

[3] Ibid., p. 219.

[4] Ibid., p. 219.

The importance of the appraisal made by Bishop Harmon is that it points up the central role played by the boards and agencies in the total work of the Church, and it points to the power that resides in the boards and agencies in shaping the response of the Church to any single issue. It is through the boards and agencies that The Methodist Church as a national body mediates its response. We have already discussed the central importance of the annual conferences in shaping and carrying out the response of the Church in the individual conference areas. As we have seen, the response on the issue of race has been greatly varied in the disparate locales. The response of the annual conferences was seen to take the form of policy formation for the conference, delegation of tasks to commissions and executives, corporate action in some instances, and support and encouragement directed to local churches, ministers, and members. The importance of the boards and agencies is that they participate in policy determination and play a major role in shaping the implementation of policy as formulated by the General Conference. Furthermore, they develop and maintain programs requiring expenditure of massive funds of this ten million member denomination.

In a real sense, it may be said that all of the work of all of the boards and agencies is related in some way to the issue of the Church and race. Thus, although the Board of Pensions has prime responsibility for the continued financial security of retired ministers, widows, and families, its policies governing its huge investments may demonstrate the degree to which The Methodist Church is totally committed to its stated goal of inclusiveness. Used selectively in a manner similar to Project Equality endorsed by the Detroit Annual Conference, these funds could play an important role in influencing policies of individual companies and could demonstrate Methodist commitment. Used without reference to the goal of inclusiveness, these funds could contribute heavily to the maintenance of patterns of discrimination and provide a major internal contradiction within the Church on its stance. Dissertations have been written on specific aspects of single boards of the Church. It would be impossible even to describe all of the programs of the boards and agencies in one work, much less in one chapter.

Of necessity, this chapter will deal selectively with what the boards and agencies are doing to implement the policy on race in order to give an overview of this important part of the Methodist structure. Therefore, there will be two foci in this chapter: (1) We will deal in detail with the actions taken by the boards and agencies delegated specific responsibility for the implementation of the policy of inclusiveness in Church and society. Included here will be the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs of the Board of Christian Social Relations and the Section of Christian Social Relations of the Woman's Division of Christian Service. (2) To present a general picture of the response of the boards and agencies, we will deal with specific policies, or lack of policies, of certain major boards and agencies whose work impinges on the area of race. Beyond that, we will take special note of important actions or decisions related to race. We shall also include the Judicial Council of the Church within this section.

The major boards and agencies in The Methodist Church include The Boards of Missions, Education, Evangelism, Pensions, Lay Activities, Publication, Hospitals and Homes, and Christian Social Concerns, The Council on World Service and Finance, The co-ordinating Council, and several commissions with special tasks. Enumeration at this point is useful for purposes of illustrating the Structure of the Church and for pinpointing areas of specialized responsibility.[5]

We move first, then, to consideration of those agencies having specialized responsibilities in shaping the Church's response to racial problems.

The Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs

The Board of Christian Social Concerns has been delegated prime responsibility in the Church to deal with social problems. Its official purpose is, "To lift up before the members of the church and also the secular world the Christian concern for personal, social and civic righteousness, to analyze the issues which confront the nation and the world as well as the local community and the person, and to propose Christian lines of action. . . ."[6] The Board of Christian Social Concerns is an amalgam of agencies which has primary responsibility in specific problem areas. Its work today is divided into three main areas under three divisional headings, the Division of Alcohol Problems and General Welfare, the Division of Peace and Order, and the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs. Our concern is with the work of the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, whose responsibility is set down as follows,

---

[5] See the Discipline and the Harmon work on the organization of the Church for a complete statement of the particular tasks of each board, agency, or commission.

[6] Discipline, 1964, op. cit., Para. 1516.

> ...to conduct a program of research, education, and action centering around the following Christian social concerns: race relations; civil liberties; public policy on education; church and state relations; civic responsibility; labor-management relations; agriculture; conservation; government and private economic policy and practice; technological change; unemployment; housing; and such other concerns as the board may sepcify. The general policies shall be established by the division, subject to the approval of the board.[7]

The statement of the range of responsibility of the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs (hereafter referred to as the Division of Human Relations, or the Division) is important for us because it serves forcefully to remind us again that The Methodist Church has many more concerns than race relations. Although our special effort is to ferret out what the Church is doing in regard to race, we must be aware of the total context in which this is being done. The work of the Division of Human Relations must be seen in the context of the General Board of Christian Social Concerns, and that must be seen in the larger framework of all of the administrative agencies of the Church. As we have already noted, and as shall become clearer still, the work of many of the other major boards of the Church impinge directly on the problem of race. Yet, in every other case save that of the Division of Human Relations, race comes into focus only as one of many problems to be encountered in carrying out the primary task of the given agency. Only in the case of the Division of Human Relations is there a specific mandate to study and to develop programs of response in the area of race.[8]

---

[7] Ibid., Para. 1541. 1.

The Division's budgetary allowance for race is of major importance in our assessment of its work and in our understanding of the response of the Church through its national agencies, and analysis of the financial situation at this point provides a useful introduction to the response of the Division. We have noted before that financial expenditure alone is not an adequate basis on which to evaluate the quality or the quantity of effort devoted to any particular problem area. Nevertheless, funds are essential for the employment of personnel, for research, for publications, for conferences, and for support of inter-church and civil rights agencies. Since the Division has been delegated prime responsibility for race relations, its available funds provide one measure of the commitment of the Church to obtaining its goal of inclusiveness. The financial aspect becomes all the more central when we consider the efforts made by the Division of Human Relations and the Board of Christian Social Concerns to obtain more funds for its own efforts and for the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches. We have already noted the stepped up response of the annual conferences and the bishops as the tempo of the conflict in the nation over civil rights and civil rights legislation increased. The Division of Human Relations, in attempting to fulfill its mandate, requested an increase in its financial resources. The response made by the Church through the General Conference and the Council on World Service and Finance, the agency responsible for the disbursement of funds, is of central concern to our assessment of the denomination as a national body.

---

[8] There is an exception to this statement in that the Section of Christian Social Relations of The Woman's Division of the National Division of the Board of Missions has been centrally concerned and involved with the matter of race. However, the Woman's division may be viewed as a parallel structure to the administrative agencies of the Church in that it worked on an independent basis for many years. The Section of Christian Social Concerns works in conjunction with the Division of Human Relations on many matters today, in addition to running its own program. The Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations also presents a special case.

The request for funds came at the climax of the intensification of the conflict over race in the nation in the 1960's. With the sit-ins of the early 1960's, a new phase of the civil rights struggle in the United States was inaugurated. Demonstrations, freedom rides, and other confrontations occurred with increasing frequency throughout the South. With the demonstrations led by Martin Luther King, Jr., in Birmingham in 1963, the nation's attention became riveted on civil rights and remained so until the passage of the Civil Rights Bill of 1964 and the Civil Rights Bill of 1965. The budgetary allowance of the Division of Human Relations for race relations during the fiscal year 1963-1964 was $10,000 out of a total budget of $93,200. $5,000 extra was taken from Division reserves to give to the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches. In 1964-1965 the "race budget" of the Division was $15,600. Of this, $5,000, or nearly one third of the total, was earmarked for the Commission on Religion and Race. Salaries for the three staff members of the Division, who devoted part of their time to efforts related to race, must be added to these figures.[9]

Requests for special funds made by the Division of Human Relations took two forms. First, the Division attempted to secure vastly increased funds for its own work. Second, the Division and the Board of Social Concerns attempted to gain an affirmative response from the Council on World Service and Finance to an appeal from the National Council's Commission on Religion and Race. Both requests were turned down. The appeal for special funds was contained in "A Statement Concerning the Need for Special Methodist Funds for Race Relations," dated April 22, 1964.[10] The appeal was made at the time of the General Conference of 1964 at which the issue of race commanded so much time. The appeal delineated several salient facts about Methodism which provided it with an opportunity greater than that of any other denomination "to bring responsible influence to bear for racial justice." In the appeal it was argued that The Methodist Church has local congregations in almost every community in every part of the nation, that The Methodist Church has a wide class spread, that The Methodist Church has the largest Negro membership of any predominantly white Protestant denomination in the nation, and that the Methodist connectional system provides a unique opportunity to bring influence to bear in Church and community life.[11]

---

[9] "Minutes" of The General Board of Christian Social Concerns, Apendix E, Oct. 5-7, 1964, mimeographed, p. 18, and Letter from Grover C. Bagby, Associate General Secretary, Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, August 18, 1965.

[10] Mimeographed statement supplied by the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, 3 pages.

The factors here enunciated provide The Methodist Church, on paper, with the best opportunity of all Protestant denominations in The United States to play an effective role in the civil rights struggle. The statement went on to say, "The Methodist Church cannot play its proper role in today's racial crisis, however, on a basis of 'business as usual.'"[12] After calling attention to special appropriations made by other smaller denominations, the statement listed the following opportunities for Methodism,

1. Provide additional and new programs of education, information, research, consultation and conference --$50,000 per year
2. Field Workers and reconciliation teams, for work in areas of special tension and need -- $50,000 per year
3. Emergency aid for Methodists who suffer reprisal and loss for representing official Methodist policy in race relations -- $30,000 per year
4. Student Interracial Ministries -- $10,000 per year
5. National Conference on Religion and Race (interfaith) -- $2,000 per year

---

[11] Ibid., p. 1

[12] Ibid., p. 2.

6. Interdenominational cooperative bail, bond, and legal defense fund -- $25,000 per year

7. Methodist bail, bond, and legal defense fund -- $25,000 per year

TOTAL SPECIAL NEEDS -- $192,000 per year[13]

The statement requested that the funds be administered through the Division of Human Relations, which is the duly established agency of the Church to deal with such matters.

The statement concluded by calling attention to the fact that a special, separate request had already come to the Council on World Service and Finance for an appropriation in the amount of $100,000 for the work of the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches.[14] Dr. Grover Bagby, Associate General Secretary of the Board of Christian Social Concerns, and senior staff member of the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, has indicated that the request for funds for the Commission on Religion and Race had been submitted "several different times in several different ways" to the Council on World Service and Finance.[15]

Both requests for funds were turned down. No funds were granted for the increased efforts of the Division of Human Relations, and no funds were alloted to the Commission on Religion and Race. The import of this study cannot be overemphasized. All of the predominantly white

---

[13] _Ibid._, pp. 2-3. [14] _Ibid._, p. 3.

[15] Bagby Letter, Aug. 18, 1965, _op. cit._

Protestant denominations, and the Roman Catholic Church, had made statements on race with increasing frequency since World War II. When the conflict heightened, these denominations were called upon to back up their words with deeds, deeds which required funds. Several denominations responded to the challenge by funding special commissions on race. The Presbyterians allotted $500,000 for a special commission for a two year period. This commission was continued beyond the two year period. The United Church of Christ established the Committee for Racial Justice Now with a yearly operating budget of $150,000 to $200,000 from special offerings in churches. The National Council of Churches responded to the challenge by establishing the Commission on Religion and Race in 1963. Member bodies of the National Council were assessed according to their size. In at least one year, the Presbyterians gave $60,000, the Lutherans gave $45,000, and the United Church of Christ gave $45,000.[16]

The Division of Human Relations requested a total of $192,000 in additional funds for its work, and supported the National Council request for $100,000. The fact that both of these requests were denied is one of the most significant pieces of evidence of all that we shall consider on the response of Methodist agencies. We have already seen that individual annual conferences and individual bishops have acted forthrightly, committing funds and personnel in the case of conferences and risking their authority in the face of known opposition in the case of bishops. Yet, in a real sense, the annual conference can be considered separate regional bodies. Although they represent the Methodist Church, they have great freedom to determine how they will handle particular issues. We have seen the great disparity in annual conference response. When the denomination acts as a national body, it acts through the boards and agencies established by the General Conference and funded by the national Church. Thus the amount of money allotted to the Division of Human Relations is an important symbol of the Church acting at the national level.

---

[16] Interview with Robert Spike, Director of the Commission on Religion and Race, National Council of Churches, December 20, 1965.

The failure of The Methodist Church to provide funds for either its own agency or the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches clearly demonstrates its unwillingness, if not inability, to take decisive action as a body on the issue of race. The explanation for such inability is not difficult to find. Funds are provided by the annual conferences on an apportionment basis. Approval for the expenditure of funds rests finally with the Council on World Service and Finance. That body, like all of the major agencies, is made up of representatives from all of the jurisdictions in the Church. Thus, southern churchmen would be called upon to vote funds to change the basic pattern of relations between the races in the South, and northern churchmen would be called upon to take action in the face of stated opposition within the Church to forced action from the North. We have already noted the bishops' warning about the possibility of another schism in The Methodist

Church if action were taken too swiftly.[17] Clearly, we have here, in 1964, another case of the kind of compromise which occurred in the period from 1800 to 1840 and institutionalized into the Union of 1939. The analysis made in Part I of this dissertation, in which it was seen that the Church either avoided a confrontation on race or compromised when the confrontation occurred has a direct bearing on our understanding of what happened in relation to the requests made by the Division of Human Relations. This refusal to act in the face of the insistent demand of both the situation and the duly appointed agency of the Church colors all else that follows in this section and puts those efforts that were made into proper perspective.

The plea for added funds submitted by the Division of Human Relations argued that in today's racial crisis the Church could not play its proper role on a basis of 'business as usual'. This phrase proved to be an apt description of the position taken by the Council on World Service and Finance in response to the requests from the Commission on Religion and Race. The annual report of the Council on World Service and Finance for 1964-1965 includes the following cryptic entry on the disposition made of a plea made by Bishop Raines on behalf of the Commission on Religion and Race,

> Commission on Religion and Race: Bishop Martin presented a request from Bishop Richard C. Raines for the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches. On

---

[17] *Supra*, p. 121.

> motion of Joseph T. Johnson, it was agreed that the Council can make no commitment but will review the situation one year from now if there is a surplus in collections for the Interdenominational Co-operation Fund.[18]

The language used in refusing to help is instructive. The matter would be reviewed in one year in the event that there was a surplus in a particular fund. Certainly this is the language, and thinking, of "business as usual". This response belies the many fine words said at the General Conference and in the Bishops' Statement in 1963, the words repeated over and over since the early 1950's, that The Methodist Church was committed to the goal of inclusiveness and that the critical nature of the problem was recognized. The tragic part of the refusal given to the Division of Human Relations and to the Commission on Religion and Race is that The Methodist Church prides itself on its traditional social action role. As the Division of Human Relations' statement pointed out, The Methodist Church does penetrate all regions of the country, does have the largest body of Negroes of any predominantly white Protestant denomination, and does have the connectional structure designed expressly to ensure effective action. The response of the denomination as a national body was neutralized for the third time in its long history of conflict over the issue of race, and the protestations about commitment to inclusiveness proved quite hollow in this case. An important lesson may be learned from this incident. Policy is often times formulated at the top, by the bishops, the agencies, and the General Conference, but the money is controlled from the bottom, or by the representatives of those most likely to be affected by strong action on the part of the Church. All of the resolutions of the General Conference on open worship and open membership will not affect the practice in a local church that conceives itself to be for whites only. All of the statements of The Methodist Church to racial equality are worthless as far as the national boards and agencies are concerned if the funds are not available to develop programs and hire personnel.

---

[18] _25th Annual Report of the Council on World Service and Finance of The Methodist Church and Minutes of the Co-ordinating Council of The Methodist Church, 1964-65_, p. 27.

We have dealt at length with the encounter over finances in 1964 because it is so crucial to our understanding of The Methodist Church as a national body. Our understanding of this refusal will put other things into perspective. Other things were being done, however. Within the budgetary framework already outlined, the major continuing effort of the Division of Human Relations may be classed as educational. Although the Division understands its task in such a way that its efforts are to be directed toward obtaining inclusiveness in the Church and toward desegregation, integration, and civil rights in the community,[19] clearly its major effort has been directed to the Church. The Division of Human Rights and Economic Relations continues the work of the General Board of Social and Economic Relations, formed in 1952. In 1960, an amalgamation of the Boards of Temperance, World Peace, and Social and Economic Relations resulted in the Board of Christian Social Concerns. In the 1950's the efforts of the General Board of Social and Economic Relations on racial matters had two major outlets. First, Interracial Conferences on Human Relations were held at selected points throughout the country. We have discussed these conferences at length in the chapter on the bishops. We need only recall here that the conferences brought together white and Negro members of The Methodist Church, often for the first time, to discover and confront mutual problems related to race. The most important aspect of the conferences was that they transcended conference boundaries and brought together Negro and white bishops and conference representatives whose geographical jurisdictions overlapped. At the Interracial Conferences, papers were presented on central issues, frequently, sociological analyses of problem areas were presented, the bishops gave addresses and engaged in an exchange of views with participants in open forum, discussion-study groups were held, and many proposals were made. It is extremely difficult to assess the lasting effect of such conferences. They did bring about an initial confrontation between the two racial groups, a fact that was remarked upon over and over by bishops and the General Secretary of the General Board of Social Concerns. The conferences did identify numerous basic problems. Beyond that, any assessment is purely conjecture. Specific "follow-up" suggestions were made, but no record is available on what accurately occurred. Changes have occurred. The number of Negro annual conferences has been reduced by almost a third. The voice of Negro spokesmen has grown stronger in

---

[19] Interview with Grover C. Bagby, January, 1964.

Church councils. These changes cannot be directly attributable to the conferences, however, and contact at the local level has not been measurably increased.

In October, 1966, the General Board of Social Concerns convened an Interagency Consultation on Local Church Racial Inclusiveness at the request of the Interboard Commission on the Local Church. The Interboard Commission has no permanent staff of its own, but it consists of staff and board representatives from all of the boards and agencies which work in areas in which there is a mandatory commission in the local church. The Interboard Commission's task is to coordinate policies and activities of the various member boards.[20] The Interboard Commission requested "the general boards and agencies of The Methodist Church to take special steps to coordinate their influence, and to cooperate in developing programs to foster racial inclusiveness in local Methodist churches. . ."[21]

The consultation was presented a variety of papers assessing the problems involved in accomplishing local church inclusiveness, and reports were made by many board and agencies on what they have been doing to promote local church inclusiveness. Two themes were recurrent in the consultation: (1) there was a recognized necessity for coordination of efforts of the boards and agencies, a situation which does not yet obtain, and (2) it was consistently stated that virtually no change toward inclusiveness had occurred at the local church level despite long established policies and efforts by the several boards and agencies. The report from the consultation is extremely important because it gives additional information on what various boards have done in relation to race and it provides some perspective on the local church, an area excluded from the perspective of this study.[22]

---

[20] Discipline, 1964, op. cit., Para. 1160-1165.

[21] "Report" of the Interagency Consultation on Local Church Racial Inclusiveness, October 26-27, 1966, mimeographed, p. 1.

The educational efforts in the 1950's was also manifested through the written word. The Board of Social and Economic Relation's magazine Contact (later Concern) regularly carried articles on race along with many other problem areas faced by society. Miscellaneous statements of the Church's position were published and widely distributed. In 1958, a study book, The Road to Brotherhood,[23] appeared containing basic information on race and disparate views held on race within the Church. The latter book was the Board's most ambitious publication on race in the 1950's and deserves special attention for what it reveals about the situation in the Church at that time. That the disparate views represented in the book dramatically reveal the basic differences in thought is not surprising, but the contrast in some views put forth with the official position of the Church on race reveals again how little impact positions taken by leaders or legislative bodies has on the Church at the local level.[24] The major purpose of publications on race was to provide material that could be used by study groups, ministers, and classes throughout the Church in their efforts to confront problems related to race or persuade individual members to support the basic Methodist position.

---

[22] In a report by the Department of Research and Survey of the National Division of the Board of Missions devoted to an appraisal of the effects of conference mergers in the North on local church inclusiveness, in "Report" of the Interagency Consultation on The Local Church, op. cit. The situation was summed up as follows, "The mergers of the annual conferences have not affected inclusiveness in the local churches to any noticeable degree. Nevertheless, reports from 85 percent of the districts in the North Central and Northeastern Jurisdictions indicated that there are 601 predominantly white Methodist congregations which have some Negro members and 45 predominantly Negro congregations with some white members. In addition, there are at least 624 all-Negro congregations in these jurisdictions." James H. Davis and Robert L. Wilson, "Toward a Racially Inclusive Church," (Philadelphia, 1966). Even though inclusiveness at the local level is not increasing as rapidly as some would desire, the figures cited here are substantially larger than those cited in a 1953 study by Dwight W. Culver, Negro Segregation in The Methodist Church.

[23] General Board of Social and Economic Relations, 1959.

In 1959, the General Board of Social and Economic Relations joined with several other boards in the Church in sponsoring the first Methodist Conference on Human Relations in Dallas, Texas. The Conference brought together representatives of Annual Conferences, from every Jurisdiction and the ten sponsoring agencies in the Church, 800 delegates in all, who met for five days to discuss these three questions put to the conference, "What is our Christian witness on race? What is the nature of the present racial crisis in our Nation and the world?

---

[24] J. Philip Wogaman, Methodism's Challenge in Race Relations; A Study of Strategy, (Boston: Boston University Press, 1960), p. 67.

What can Methodist do?"[25] The conference was designed to promote participation by those in attendance. Reports by specialists on the problem areas of housing, employment, education, and the Church were followed by interchange on the issues in eighty discussion groups into which the conferees were divided. An evaluation report of the conference submitted by about sixty per cent of those who attended the conference gave strong support to the study papers, the major presentation, the work groups, and Bible study groups. It is always difficult to assess the impact of any conference, but it is notable that on their own testimony the respondents found "opportunity to discuss the problems with people having different points of view," and "development of new ideas, new insights, and new information gained from the Conference"[26] the most valuable aspects. However, though the discussion groups were designed to bring people of different regions, races, sex, and position in the Church together, only thirteen people gave any indication that their thinking had changed.[27]

The four stated purposes of the conference were,

> To indicate clearly the interdependence of the agencies on race relations and their united concern for an authentic Christian witness on race by The Methodist Church;

---

[25] "The Message" Methodist Conference on Human Relations, small brochure, (Chicago: Conference Office), n. d.

[26] Edward O. Moe, Evaluation Report, Methodist Conference on Human Relations, n. p., Feb. 1960, p. 6.

[27] Ibid., p. 7.

> To provide a genuine interracial experience by the association of many members of The Methodist Church, from a variety of backgrounds;
>
> To face objectively and concretely the perplexing issues of race relations through Biblical and theological study, sound sociological analysis, exchange with experts, group discussion, able addresses, and spiritual enrichment by music, drama and the Holy Communion;
>
> To release to the Church and to the world a message as a pastoral letter to be read from pulpits, printed in bulletins, church school literature and other church publications, and to be carefully studied by Methodists everywhere.[28]

To some degree at least, the latter three purposes were met. It is difficult to discover what has been done in united fashion beyond sponsoring the Conference itself.[29] Certainly there have been no church wide programs in which the agencies have combined to bring their collective weight into play.

A message from the Conference was adopted, however, stating a theological basis of witness in the area of race, especially in regard to problems related to housing, education, employment, and the Church. The "Message" was very brief and non-specific. Its chief value at the time was the restatement by representatives from all geographical sections and many bureaucratic structures of the Church on the Church's position on race. The "Message" has since often been cited as a landmark in the Methodist effort to achieve its goal of inclusiveness.[30] A second Methodist Conference on Human Relations was held four years later, and it is worthwhile to compare the two at this point.

---

[28] "Message", op. cit.

[29] This, it will be recalled, was a major thrust of the Interagency Consultation on Local Church Racial Inclusiveness. The Division of Human Relations and the Section of Christian Social Concerns of the Woman's Division of the Board of Missions have a long history of cooperation on social issues. Beyond that, there is little evidence of cooperative endeavors of the sort called for by the Interboard Commission.

The distinctive factor about the Conference held in Chicago in 1963 was the change in mood evidenced by the questions posed for the conference, the change in program content, and the nature of the "Message" that resulted from the Conference. The questions posed for this Conference read, "Where is The Methodist Church currently in its structure and program in regard to race relations? What are the immediate goals toward which The Methodist Church should move in race relations? How can The Methodist Church make the greatest progress toward these goals?"[31] These questions demonstrate that for the concerned leaders, at least, the questions about "our Christian witness on race, and the nature of the present racial crisis in our Nation and the world," which were asked at the earlier Conference, were now put aside for more specific questions about courses of action the Church could and should follow.

The change in emphasis was probably rooted in the dramatic change that had occurred in the entire society in the four year period between 1959 and 1963. The civil rights movement had rapidly gained momentum with the sit-ins, the freedom rides, and demonstrations in Southern cities, and popular support for the movement had coalesced. The Conference coincided with the March on Washington, and official delegates were sent from the Conference to join the March. Leaders in the Church were undoubtedly of the mind that there had been enough talking and now wanted to concentrate on actions. There was still concern for problems in the Church, such as the merger of the Central Jurisdiction, but the great majority of addresses were by persons with special knowledge or experience on problems confronting the community. Thus within the five day course of the Conference, speakers included Martin Luther King, Jr., C. Eric Lincoln on the Black Muslims and other similar groups, Dick Gregory, the comedian, Judge J. Skelly Wright, a prominent Federal Court judge involved in civil rights cases, Clifford Baldowski, a cartoonist from the Atlanta Constitution, and G. Mennon Williams, then Under-Secretary of State for African Affairs, who spoke on "World Implications of Human Rights." Discussion sessions were devoted to community problems related to race and what the Church might do.[32]

---

[30] Discipline, 1964, Para. 1824A. 2 now uses a passage from the "Message" as one of its theological principles. The passage reads, "The Church is the instrument of God's purpose. This is his Church. It is ours only as stewards under his lordship. The House of God must be open to the whole family of God. If we discriminate against any persons, we deny the essential nature of the Church as a fellowship in Christ."

[31] "The Message," The Second Methodist Conference on Human Relations, small brochure, (Washington, D. C.: Conference Office), n. d.

Again, assessment of the results of the Conference is difficult or impossible. The "Message" from the Second Conference spoke in a very general way to a number of problems, such as housing, education, employment, the right to vote, etc. The thrust of the "Message" was that all of these areas required action by individual members and the Church to bring about change. Undoubtedly the most important part of the "Message" was the portion on the Church in which three of the pervasive problem areas of the Church related to race were identified in an assortment of recommendations to the 1964 General Conference. Several recommendations offered positive steps to be taken to resolve the complicated problem surrounding the Central Jurisdiction. One recommendation pointed to the continuing problem of exclusive policies by local churches in regard to membership and participation in the life of the Church. Finally, continuing problems of exclusion in various institutions in the Church were cited with a plea for action concluding with the recommendation "that the name of the church and funds from its budgets shall be withdrawn from any institution pursuing a policy contrary to this recommendation."[33] One further portion of the message should be noted. Under the general heading "The World," a section entitled "Economic Policies" made some specific suggestions on the use of Church funds that had tremendous potential in terms of the effect on business firms and the demonstration of the Church's commitment. This portion of the "Message" reads,

---

[32] "The Message," Second Methodist Conference, _op. cit._

> In the light of the involvement of the church in the struggle for inclusiveness and oneness within the context of a secular society, we urge the business administrators of the church
>
> (1) To utilize the potential of investment funds, e.g. those of The Board of Pensions, to achieve integrated

---

[33] Ibid.

communities through the instrumentality of Public Law 221. d3.

(2) To review its holdings and banking procedures for the purpose of developing a program of investment only with companies having non-discriminatory policies.

(3) To purchase goods and services or enter into contracts only with companies which practice non-discrimination in employment.[34]

To date no evidence has been uncovered to indicate that these recommendations have been carried out by any of the agencies in the Church or by "the business administrators of the Church." Nor did the General Conference accept the recommendation that the name and funds of the Church be cut off from any institution that discriminated on the basis of race. The interesting thing for our study is that the Second Methodist Conference on Human Relations was sponsored by eleven of the agencies in the Church including the Board of Pensions, the General Board of Education, the Board of Hospitals and Homes, and the Division of National Missions of the Board of Missions. Despite the apparent widespread support by board and agency leaders for action on the part of the General Conference, it refused to support any of the recommended actions. The failure of the General Conference to approve these specific recommendations makes it extremely hard to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Second Conference on Human Relations beyond its immediate publicity impact and any effect it may have had on participants in the

---

[34] Ibid.

Conference. We must recall, however, that at the first Conference, the number of participants who testified to having changed their minds was neglible. Furthermore, the leadership of board and agency staff personnel in affecting Church policies must be questioned.

The two conferences on human rights were sponsored by a variety of agencies within the Church. However, the director of each conference was A. Dudley Ward, the General Secretary of the Board of Christian Social Concerns and former General Secretary of the General Board of Social and Economic Relations. Thus, while recognizing the shared sponsorship, it is not amiss to assess these Conferences within the framework of our discussion of the work of the Division on Human Relations and Economic Affairs and its predecessor, the General Board of Social and Economic Relations.

Within the limited budget available to it, the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs has tried to attack the problem of race in two major ways. First, numerous publications, ranging from one page flyers to booklets have appeared in the 1960's. One of the most important booklets, published jointly with the Woman's Division of Christian Service, was "The Methodist Church and Race," a thirty-four page booklet designed to be a guide to study and discussion of history and facts about the Central Jurisdiction and the Church.[35] In addition to its own publications, the Division on Human Relations distributed United Church of Christ "action guides" on racial problems, and articles such as "Why Demonstrations."[36] The Division has also distributed a booklet on suggestions for conference mergers based on experience of the completed merger of a Negro annual conference with four white annual conferences.[37] Concern, the Division periodical has devoted abundant space to the problem of race, and many articles by Division personnel have appeared in other Church publications. One of the staff members of the Division during the early 60's, W. Aster Kirk, is a member of the Committee of five of the Central Jurisdiction, which we discussed earlier in this work.

---

[35] Sept., 1962.

A second major approach of the Division to the problem of race has been through memorials, resolutions, and special pleas sent to the General Conference. We have already discussed at length the fate of Division requests for major money outlays to the Division itself and to the National Council's Commission on Religion and Race. There has generally been more willingness on the part of the General Conference to pass resolutions and improve policy statements which appear as recommendations for action in the Discipline. Although the Division was not alone in proposing new legislation at the last General Conference, numerous passages on race were included at various places in the

---

[36] "Why Demonstrations," by Sarah Patton Boyle, which appeared first in Church and Race, Aug., 1964.

[37] Richard C. Stazesky and Winston Taylor, "Suggestions for Successful Mergers: Central Jurisdiction Annual Conferences with Annual Conferences of Geographical Jurisdictions," op. cit.

Discipline urging institutions and agencies to bring practice into line with Church principle.[38] One minor victory was the inclusion of a statement on race which includes qualified support for civil disobedience, something for which the Division struggled.[39] The language is quite conservative, however, and merely attests formally to adherence to the traditional understanding of the right of the individual Christian, under certain circumstances, to disobey the law.

In addition to conferences, publications, and legislative endeavors, the Division has engaged in miscellaneous other actions. It has made pleas before the judicial council on various issues;[40] with the Woman's

---

[38] See "Methodists Speak," a report on legislation by the 1964 General Conference, small pamphlet by The General Board of Christian Social Concerns.

[39] Discipline, 1964, Para. 1824C. 3. After a statement on just and unjust laws and an affirmation that legal recourse will be used in all cases where possible, the paragraph concludes, "In rare instances, where legal recourse is unavailable or inadequate for redress of grievances from laws or their application that, on their face, are unjust or immoral, the Christian conscience will 'obey God rather than men.'" No guidance is given on when such rare instances occur, and in the United States, where appeal is possible to the Supreme Court of the United States, it might be argued that no such instance occurs until a ruling has been given by that body. It would then have to be argued that the Supreme Court ruling was unjust, which might be difficult in the face of the tenor of decisions on civil rights cases in the last two decades.

[40] One of the most extensive efforts of the Division of Human Relations before the Judicial Council involved petitions concerning Methodist law on the right of local churches to bar persons from worship. These petitions, growing out of the arrest of a number of persons in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1963 and 1964, will be discussed fully when we consider the Judicial Council later. We may note, however, that many hours went into the construction of one petition that was 79 pages long, entitled, "All Persons...Are Proper Candidates...."

Division of Christian Service; it supported for one year a white minister who was to rove about the South as a trouble-shooter; Division personnel have been active participants in some of the major demonstrations in the South; it has given support through various mailings to the civil rights legislation of 1964 and 1965; as one of their major functions it has developed suggested programs for adoption by the annual conferences and have then participated in follow-up work with the conferences;[41] and they collected between $1000 and $2000 to aid the ministers who had trouble with their local congregations for signing the "Born of Conviction" statement in Mississippi in the early 1960's.

Woman's Division

As we have seen, the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs is the agency of the Church which has been designated specific responsibility for developing and directing the response of the Church in the area of race. However, there is another agency within the Church whose work closely parallels the work of the Division and the Board of

---

[41] In 1965, the Division was promoting a program on race in all annual conferences emphasizing local church action on race. A leaflet, entitled, "Mandates for Action" suggested four "action projects" directed toward the Church and sixteen "action projects" directed toward the community. In August, 1965, Grover Bagby reported, "It is my impression that this program is not being pushed very hard except in a certain few areas and in a certain few locations." He suggested that a Church-wide emphasis on The Mission of the Church, a quadrennial program, was 1re-empting effort and interest for this kind of program. Bagby Letter, op. cit. Bagby's comments point up a prevailing problem in the Church when multiple programs on special interests are being pushed by the various boards and agencies. Once again, the need for coordinated efforts by the boards and agencies may be cited.

Christian Social Concerns. The Woman's Division of the Board of Missions is one of the three major divisions of the Board of Missions. In the past, the Woman's Division of Christian Service was an autonomous agency which ran its own foreign and home mission programs and carried on other programs independently of, and parallel to, the boards and agencies of the Church. Today the Woman's Division is officially part of the Board of Missions, and its mission programs and vast sums of money are under the general direction of the Board of Missions. The historic autonomy of the Woman's Division has not been completely lost, however, and it still carries on many programs of its own. The base of its power, the source of its income, and its major avenues of impact are the thousands of local women's societies in churches throughout the land.

The women's societies developed as independent groups in response to the virtual exclusion of women from participation in the work of the Church. Although their major mission programs have now come under the direction of the Board of Missions, women hold important staff and board positions and participate in major decisions on missions. An example of the importance of the Woman's Division of the Board of Missions may be seen in the fact that in 1965 $4,000,000 of the $9,000,000 in the budget of the National Division of the Board of Missions was raised by the Woman's Division. Another $5,000,000 was allocated to the work of the World Division of the Board of Missions.[42]

---

[42] Interview with Thelma Stevens, Assistant General Secretary, Section of Christian Social Relations, Nov. 17, 1965.

The Section of Social Relations of the Woman's Division of the Board of Missions, formerly the Department of Christian Social Relation of the Women's Division of Christian Service, plays an important role in shaping and developing the response of the Church to any major social issue. The Section, which has four staff members, and a present annual budget of $150,000, often has as much or more money available for any single issue than does the Board of Christian Social Concerns. In the case of a controversial issue such as race, there is more independence and flexibility in the autonomous Woman's Division than in the Board of Christian Social Concerns. The figures on size of budget and size of staff, however, only reveal a part of the potential impact of the Section. As many as 30,000 to 40,000 groups throughout the country may be studying or working on any single project at a given time. This is where the real potential of the Woman's Division is located.[43]

The Section of Christian Social Relations conceives its task in the area of race as study and action in Church and society.[44] Our assessment of the work of the Section will be directed at how that focus has been manifested. There is no question that the Section and its predecessors have had a consistent, demonstrated concern for race. Thelma Stevens, Assistant General Secretary of the Section of Christian Social Relations, a long time leader in Methodist efforts in social action, reported that women in the South began work on race relations problems long before the

---

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.

Union of the two Episcopal Methodist Churches.[45] She mentioned secret meetings between white and Negro women that led to the formation of the Southern Association for the Prevention of Lynching in 1920, programs in volving white women in the education of Negroes, and studies on a manual entitled "A Preface to Racial Understanding" in states such as Georgia and Mississippi in the early 1930's as examples of early efforts by Southern church women.[46] After the Union in 1939, the Woman's Division consistently maintained its interest in race.

The Woman's Division has taken cognizance of a vast range of problems related to Negro-white relations. One of the major problems in assessing the impact of the Woman's Division is that response to particular problems ranged from taking official cognizance of the problems in the form of an announcement in a yearly journal, to lengthy study of issues by thousands of study groups across the country, to overt efforts to influence legislation in the Church and in the nation. Often records only show what was suggested and do not give any indication of what efforts followed the suggestion. Any final assessment must thus be done with some hesitation. We may benefit, however, by taking note of the wide range of racial problems to which attention has been directed before proceeding to more careful analysis of major efforts of the Woman's Division in the last two decades.

---

[45] Ibid.

[46] Interview with Thelma Stevens in conjunction with the preparation of four volume study on Methodism and Society by some members of the Boston University Faculty under the direction of Nils Ehrenstrom, April 8, 1958.

Reports for the first quadrennium of the newly united Church give us a picture of the diversity of activities and the kind of understanding that existed at that time. Entries in the Annual Reports include the following: an expressed awareness of the necessity to allay fear or distrust arising over Supreme Court decisions affecting Negro life and to work for the repeal of the poll tax on the part of women in the Southeastern Jurisdiction; a committee on Minority Groups and Interracial Co-operation among the seven resource committees of the Division; concern over jobs in defense industry for Negroes;[47] protests against segregated blood banks;[48] and a conference on the Status of Minority Groups in a Christian Democracy.[49] In addition to these general concerns, local Society Projects included kindergartens and day nurseries for Negro and Mexican groups; a Negro Company from a training camp invited to church and a Negro chaplain invited to preach; an interracial project resulting "in better living conditions for Negroes;" signatures secured for anti-lynching protest; a panel discussion on Race Relations Sunday; several days spent at a state legislature working for passage of education appropriations for scholarship aid to Negroes, resulting in $50,000 appropriated; and securing a library for a Negro school.[50]

---

[47] 2nd Annual Report of the Woman's Society of Christian Service, 1942.

[48] 3rd Annual Report of the Woman's Society of Christian Service, 1943.

[49] 4th Annual Report of the Woman's Society of Christian Service, 1944, p. 186.

[50] Annual Report, op. cit., 1942, p. 182.

These entries reveal general expressions of concern as well as some specific activities in which women's groups participated. It is impossible to accurately evaluate such concerns and activity because there is no information available on what form stated protests took, how many people were involved, how long the protests continued, and more important, what effect such protests had. The local activities cited above were among seventy or eighty entries reported for that year alone. It is clear that a discussion on Race Relations Sunday, inviting Negro soldiers to worship, and working for passage of scholarship aid to Negroes represent varying degrees of involvement and effectiveness. However, the nature of the difference is not readily apparent. If the scholarship funds obtained, for example, were to send Negroes out of state in order to maintain segregated state schools, our evaluation would be far different than if the effort was to assure educational opportunities for Negroes in their home state. The entries listed seldom identify locality. File copies of local reports usually contain no information beyond the kind of one line entries we have included above. Lack of additional information prevents further analysis.

The above information and comments are included, first, to impress the reader with the fact stated earlier that the work of the Woman's Division is a combination of the efforts of the staff of the Section of Christian Social Relations and thousands of jurisdictional, state, district, and local women's societies across the nation. The Woman's Society of Christian Service has been called the largest woman's organization in the world. The above information is also included, however, to demonstrate the necessity of limiting our focus in this work to the efforts of the officially appointed Section of Christian Social Relations, which is always supported by the societies at various levels. In so limiting our perspective, we parallel our discussion in other sections of this work in which we omit discussion of the local church and the work of individual ministers. We are also able to focus on those programs and activities which have received major attention and financial resources. Our analysis of these activities and programs reveals the nature of the response and impact of the Woman's Society in its efforts to implement the Church's goal of inclusiveness.

The major activities of the Section, formerly Department, of Christian Social Relations in the area of race relations have included the following,

(1) The publication of States' Laws on Race and Color by Pauli Murray in 1951.[51] This 750 page compendium was at the time the most complete work available on the subject and remains a basic source book.

(2) The Charter of Racial Policies. In 1952, the Woman's Division of Christian Service adopted a Charter of Racial Policies. In the next decade it continued efforts for adoption and implementation of the Charter by local societies. In 1964, the General Conference adopted

---

[51] Woman's Division of Christian Service.

the Charter and recommended it to the churches for implementation.[52] This is considered one of the most important accomplishments of the Woman's Division.

(3) The Quadrennial Emphasis Program on Race. In the quadrennium 1961-1964, the Section of Christian Social Relations, in conjunction with the Board of Christian Social Concerns, directed most of its efforts on race to the Quadrennial Program on Race. The heart of the program was the formation of 39 regional consultative committees which cut across jurisdictional and conference boundaries. The committees were to serve as a trained cadre of experts available throughout the Church to support and foment change. One of the important functions of the consultative committees was to be the training of other committees within each region, which in turn would train committees in local churches. The plan projected the expansion of committees until several million members of the Church would be actively at work in the race problem by 1964.[53] During the quadrennium, the Section of Christian Social Relations spent between $12,500 and $15,000 per year on the Quadrennial Program on Race, or nearly the entire amount of its budget available for racial matters.[54] Most of the expenditures were for consultations held throughout the quadrennium.

---

[52] See the Charter in Appendix B.

[53] Report of the Orientation Conference for the Quadrennial Program on Race Relations, Louisville, Kentucky, by the Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions and The Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs of the General Board of Christian Social Concerns, p. 4.

[54] See financial statements in Annual Reports from 1961 to 1964.

(4) We have noted that the Woman's Division of Christian Service has utilized study groups to inform members in thousands of groups across the nation and to bring about change in the Church. Two study books that were directed specifically to race were Christ, The Church, and Race in 1957-58[55] and We Can and We Will in 1961-62.[56] The latter work was especially important in that it was a manual for the Quadrennial Program on Race. The author, Dwight L. Culver, was especially qualified for the task since he had written earlier on the problem of the segregation of Negroes in The Methodist Church.[57]

(5) The Frogmore Conference. In February, 1966, the Section of Christian Social Relations held a Conference at Frogmore, South Carolina, again in conjunction with the Division of Human Relations and Economic Welfare.[58] The ten day conference, centered around the theme "Action Imperative: Mission for 1966-68," had as its primary purpose the training of volunteers from areas of racial tension to become more involved in action to create a climate for racial inclusiveness in Church

---

[55] Woman's Division of Christian Service.

[56] Dwight L. Culver, Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions and Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs of the Board of Christian Social Concerns.

[57] Negro Segregation in the Methodist Church, op. cit.

[58] Findings of the Assignment Imperative: Mission for 1966-1968 Conference, Frogmore, South Carolina, February 1-11, 1966, by the Section of Christian Social Relations, Woman's Division, Board of Missions and the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, Board of Christian Social Concerns.

and society. The conference brought together seventy-five persons from twelve states and five foreign countries. The conference focused on special problems in selected tension areas, community organization and development plans and experiences, and addresses on particular problems, such as race relations in the United States, housing, employment, and education. The conference attempted to create a national and international perspective on the problem of racial tension.

The Frogmore Conference represents a major redirection of resources of the Section of Christian Social Relations. Thelma Stevens, Associate General Secretary of the Section, said that the Section planned to concentrate on training groups with the primary task of picking up the pieces in trouble areas.[59] The shift to a small group of volunteers from selected areas for intensive training represents a major change in focus. The small group approach is being substituted for the 39 Consultative Committee program, which had been the heart of the Quadrennial Program on Race, and which had not proved effective.

In addition to the group training, the impact of which will not be known for some time, the Frogmore Conference performed another very important function for the Church. The Methodist Church and Race was a central issue of discussion throughout the Conference, and two concerns given special attention were the Delta Ministry Porgram of the National Council of Churches and Programs of Church Extension of the Church.[60]

---

[59] Interview with Thelma Stevens, _op. cit._

[60] _Findings_, _op. cit._, pp. 21-23.

Since the meeting the National Division of the Board of Missions has voted $70,000 to The Delta Ministry Program for the current year and the Section of Christian Social Relations has committeed $30,000. No action has been taken on Church extension, but the issue has been under debate by board of directors of the Board of Missions and a policy statement will be voted on in early 1967. The Frogmore statement on Church extension will most likely play a role in that vote.

(6) In addition to the above programs, the Section of Christian Social Relations has given continuous support to Civil Rights legislation,[61] has provided staff leadership for numerous conferences across the South on subjects related to race, and has formulated memorials to the General Conference proposing specific changes in the segregated structure of the Church.[62] The Woman's Division claims to be the first agency in the Church to support the 1954 Supreme Court Decision on segregated schools.[63] One of the staff members, Peggy Billings, was in Selma, Alabama, in 1965 during the confrontation on race there.

---

[61] Interview with Thelma Stevens, op. cit. and interview with Peggy Billings, one of the four staff members of the Section of Christian Social Relations, Dec. 13, 1966. As an example of such action, as the close of the Annual Meeting of the Woman's Division of Christian Service, Jan. 22, 1966, members of the Executive Committee were encouraged to travel to Washington to see their senators and representatives to support the Civil Rights Act of 1966. Journal of the Annual Meeting of the Woman's Division of Christian Service, Jan. 22, 1966, p. 50.

[62] Interview with Peggy Billings, op. cit., and Letter from Thelma Stevens, Aug. 17, 1965.

[63] Interview with Thelma Stevens, op. cit.

The Section played a major role in the inception of, and continually supported, the "Assignment: Race," program of United Church Women from 1961 to 1963. Phase two of that program has now been initiated. One of its most controversial actions was the provision of bail money to three girls arrested while trying to attend services at a Methodist Church in Jackson, Mississippi,[64] in 1963. The Woman's Division later affirmed this action at its annual convention in the face of substantial opposition from local societies in Mississippi. In 1963, the Section shared with the Division of Social and Economic Relations the support of two missionaries, originally from the South, and two ministers. The missionaries, on leave from Malaya, worked primarily in their home state of Mississippi trying to change the climate, the two ministers operated as trouble shooters throughout the South. Support of the ministers was discontinued after a year. The National Division of the Board of Mission, the Mississippi Conference of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, and the Mississippi Conference of the Central Jurisdiction are now sponsoring their full-time service in Mississippi.[65] Finally, the Section has continually contributed articles on race to *Methodist Women,* the magazine of the Woman's Division of Christian Service, as well as to other Church periodicals.

The Woman's Division of Christian Service has done some things in race relations apart from the special programs of the Section of Christian Social Relations. Most important, it operated numerous community centers and homes across the country which helped to break down barriers between races in some areas. The centers and homes have now been taken over by the National Division of the Board of Missions. Today, almost all operate on an integrated basis or support inclusiveness. Some community centers are taking an active role in fomenting change in their communities.[66] The Woman's Division has had a committee on relations with the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church Women and numerous integrated meetings have been held to further understanding. The Division has also had a Committee on Racial Policies and Practices which has supported the work of the Section on the 39 regional conferences and which strongly supported the bail money given to the girls in Mississippi.[67] The Woman's Division runs a series of schools on Missions each summer involving hundreds of Church Women. For the past several years these have been held on a regional, rather than jurisdictional, basis and on a biracial basis. This has resulted in biracial meetings for women of the Southeastern and South Central Jurisdictions, some for the first time. This has also tended to break down jurisdictional divisions. At these meetings the Woman's Division has followed closely the requirement that housing be on a non-segregated basis.[68] This is a provision of the Church for all nationally run meetings to which the Woman's Division gave early support.

---

[64] *Ibid.*

[65] Bagby Letter, Aug. 18, 1965, *op. cit.*

---

[66] Interview with Mary Lou Barnwell, Assistant General Secretary, Section of Home Fields of the National Division of the Board of Missions, Dec. 13, 1966.

[67] Journal of the Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting, Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions of The Methodist Church, Jan. 14-20, 1964, pp. 16-17.

The assessment of the impact of the efforts of the Woman's Division and its Section of Christian Social Relations is difficult to make. The chief difficulty lies in the fact that the major single thrust of its effort has been educational, through thousands of study groups and endless consultation. The educative role in race relations is of great importance, yet it is difficult to assess how effective any single educational attempt has been, and the ability of the most effective educational efforts to change patterns of prejudice has been seriously questioned.[69]

---

[68] Interview with Peggy Billings, op. cit.

[69] Gordon Allport has questioned the ability of the informational approach to change prejudicial patterns if the proper attitude is lacking. See The Nature of Prejudice, (Anchor Edition, New York: Doubleday, 1958), p. 451. See Ch. 30 for a full discussion of various methods directed at reduction of prejudice. George E. Simpson and J. Milton Yinger make the point that education is too often accepted without qualification as a method to reduce prejudice. Among other points, they state, "Recent studies indicate that the imparting of specific information about minority groups does not materially alter attitudes toward members of those groups." Racial and Cultural Minorities, (rev. ed.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 764. See pp. 757-773 for a full discussion of various forms of education. Both sources cited emphasize the potential importance of information, but both put heavy emphasis on the importance of the individual personality of the person receiving the information. We have noted that the Woman's Division has used study groups extensively in its efforts, and women in the Church are undoubtedly the most informed group of any group of members. Yet, in the book The Church in the Racially Changing Community, Robert L. Wilson and James H. Davis of the National Division of the Board of Missions did a case study on an integrated Church and noted that Woman's Society of Christian Service was the last organization in this particular church to change. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 99. The heavy reliance on conferences, consultations, and study groups where papers are delivered and books read is open to question on the basis of the analysis by Allport and Simpson and Yinger. Furthermore, there is seldom any indication that follow-up action is ensured.

There is no question that the Woman's Division, through consistent effort on such programs as gaining support for its Charter of Racial Policies, has worked more diligently than any body in the Church to bring about a confrontation of Church members and problems related to race relations.

Several qualifications must be made about the impact of the response of the Woman's Division. First, the Woman's Division of Christian Service has until recently been an autonomous body paralleling the structure of the Church. As such it has had great freedom, but its impact on annual conferences, bishops, boards and agencies, and the General Conference has been limited by lack of direct participation and voice in decision making bodies. Today, in the framework of the union with the National Division of the Board of Missions, women play a more direct role in the decision making process. Second, the major thrust, as we have seen, has been toward study groups, consultations, and conferences. The consultations have often been one-shot affairs without any follow-up. Even consultations and committees with some longevity have produced fairly little results. The Section of Christian Social Relations put over $50,000 into the Quadrennial Program on Race, most of which was devoted to the 39 Consultative Committees. Grover Bagby, the present Associate General Secretary of the Division of Human Relations, said in an interview in 1964 that he knew nothing about the performance of the committees, which had been formed before he took the position. Later, he suggested that crossing conference and jurisdictional lines may have been the major obstacle to success since all operations are structured on conference and jurisdictional levels. The regions provided no base of operations.[70] Peggy Billings, one of the staff of the Section of Christian Social Relations, said that an attempt in 1965 to revive the Consultative Committees brought "not a single response."[71] This is something less than the hoped for one million Methodists active on racial problems.

A major critique of the efforts of the Woman's Division and the Section was made by Peggy Billings. She said that one of the chief problems has been that women have had to go outside the Church if they desired to get involved in social action related to race because the Church has not provided avenues for involvement.[72] The implications of this comment from one centrally involved in the work of the Church are far-reaching. It supports the suggestion above that study and consultation does not necessarily lead to action or change. It supports the comment above that women, in a parallel structure to the rest of the Church, have been isolated from decision making and active participation. Most important, it tends to further support the general conclusion of Part I of this work that the history of Methodism and race have mitigated against strong efforts by Church agencies at the national level to develop and effectuate race relations activities. This conclusion, drawn from the analysis of

---

[70] Bagby Letter, Aug. 18, 1965, op. cit.

[71] Interview with Peggy Billings, op. cit.

[72] Ibid.

Separation and Union, has thus far been borne out by the analysis of the conflict over the Central Jurisdiction, the inability of the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs to get support for its own suggested programs and for the National Council of Churches Commission on Relition and Race, and now by the inability of women to get centrally involved through the Church in the confrontation over the race issue in the nation in the last decade. Miss Billings statement is supported by the journals and reports of the Woman's Division for the late 1950's and early 1960's. With the exception of the bail money for the three girls in Jackson, Mississippi, and the money provided for the Delta Ministry program, there are no indications that the Woman's Division or the Section initiated any programs that could be termed action of a type different than its traditional educative action.

Many people within the Church, including board staff members and bishops, consider the Woman's Division and the Section of Christian Social Relations to be the leader within the Church on social issues.[73] There is much to substantiate the expressed feelings about the Woman's Division. Yet, it is important in our analysis on The Methodist Church and Race that we understand the nature of the role played by this leading body in our assessment of the total response of the Church. The shift that has taken place in 1966 with the emphasis put on group training at the Frogmore Conference indicates a reappraisal within the Section of Christian Social Relations of the effectiveness of its traditional reliance on study and consultation. The Section of Christian Social Relations views its task in the area of race as study and action in Church and society. As we have already indicated, many actions at the local level, which may be the most important, go unreported or are reported in only sketchy form. The Section has supported civil rights legislation and has promoted efforts to inform Congressmen of support. In the main, however, the efforts of the Woman's Division and the Section appear to have been directed more to study than to action, and more in the Church than in society.

---

[73] One such expression on the role of the Woman's Division appears in Walter G. Muelder, Methodism and Society in the Twentieth Century, Vol. II, of Methodism and Society, (New York: Abingdon, 1961), p. 236. He says, "... The social education and action program of the Woman's Division of Christian Service has been the most forward looming and locally effective of any of the work of the church as measured by actual instances of interracial fellowship and specificity of programming. In communities and areas where the ministers and laymen held to the segregated jurisdictional lines of the church's polity, the women often crossed these lines successfully in their meetings."

Board of Missions

Missions and evangelism have been central and traditional activities of all of the major church bodies. Although the purpose of these two activities is very similar, The Methodist Church divides certain aspects of the attempt to reach other people into two separate areas presided over by two major boards in the Church. The purpose of the Board of Missions is set out in the Discipline as follows,

> The supreme aim of missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all peoples in all lands as their divine Savior, to persuade them to become his disciples, and to gather these disciples into Christian churches; to enlist them in the building

> of the kingdom of God; to co-operate with these churches; to promote world Christian fellowship; and to bring to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ.[74]

All aspects of the work of the Board of Missions, as is evident from the stated aim, touch on the problem of race relations. We have been discussing the problem of race as manifested within the United States in regard to Negro-white relations. The problem is obviously not isolated to the United States, nor is it confined to Negro-white relations. The Methodist Church prides itself on being a world Church, and with increasing frequency statements have been made at General Conference sessions by delegates from foreign countries about the harm that is being done to mission efforts by the racial situation in the United States in general and by the restrictive practices in The Methodist Church in particular.

The Board of Missions is divided into three major divisions, the World Division, the National Division, and Woman's Division. Although we recognize the importance of the world dimensions of the issues surrounding the relations between races, we shall not deal with the work of the World Division in this study because of our focus. We have already investigated the efforts of the Woman's Division, and thus shall focus our attention in this section on the National Division of Missions.

The National Division is divided into two main sections, the Section of Home Fields and the Section of Church Extension. We shall deal with each in turn.

---

[74] _Discipline_, 1964, _op. cit._, Para. 1176.

1. The Section of Home Fields

A listing of the disparate areas of work that fall within the jurisdiction of the Section of Home Fields provides an initial understanding of the impact the work of this Section has on the efforts of the Church to implement its goal of inclusiveness. The Section includes Missions and Provisional Annual Conferences, City Work, Town and Country Work, Social Welfare (Children's Homes and Residences), Medical Work, Community Centers, Educational Work, Goodwill Industries, and the department of Research and Survey. The National Division maintains over one hundred community centers, fifteen residence homes for young women, thirty-five homes for children and youth, and several schools. In addition, several hospitals remain under its control, there are a number of special missions to Indians and Spanish speaking immigrants, and over 125 units of Goodwill Industries. In addition to institutions for which it has prime responsibility, the National Division provides aid to churches and church-related institutions that have special needs. Much of this work relates directly to the efforts of the Church in the area of race relations.

We have noted previously that efforts to force Methodist institutions to cease restrictive practices by limitation or cessation of financial support have failed to gain support at General Conference sessions. There is, however, a directive in the Discipline which applies to the work of the Board of Missions, which reads,

> The board and the several divisions thereof shall continue to perform their respective functions in harmony with the policy of The Methodist Church to eliminate discrimination based on race or color.[75]

Application of this directive has been a concern of the staff of the National Division. A report entitled, "Race Relations and the National Division," summarizes the existing situation at the time of the meeting in March, 1965.[76] In that report certain recent changes in segregated patterns were noted as well as some continuing problems. Most of the institutions under the Section of Home Fields were reported to be functioning on an integrated basis or had an open-door policy. Many of these institutions were in changing neighborhoods, often in the South, and had in the past served only white people. It was reported that most of these institutions have now changed their formerly restrictive patterns.[77] As neighborhood population patterns change, some of the institutions, particularly community centers have become re-segregated, and now serve an entirely Negro body. Community centers generally serve a rather limited neighborhood. Some centers provide bi-racial service, serving separate white and Negro groups in separate housing areas.

It was noted in the report that several community centers are still "under pressure to practice the open-door policy,"[78] and that not all children's homes and residences have been integrated.[79] Miss Mary Lou Barnwell, Assistant General Secretary of the Section of Home Fields, said that unless a definite policy was adopted by an institution stating that it refused to serve on an interracial basis, the Division tried to work with the institution to bring about change rather than withdraw funds.[80] One of the most interesting items reported was that some Negro churches in northern cities are now becoming integrated. The report of the department of City Work called for efforts to help Negro congregations recognize their responsibility to serve the whole community, including whites.[81] This is a reversal of the usual efforts to encourage whites to serve Negroes. In many cases only Negro congregations remain in inner city situations. The merger of Central Jurisdiction Conferences in the North with the Northeastern and North Central Jurisdictions has brought church buildings sold by white congregations to Negro congregations back into these jurisdictions.[82]

---

[75] Ibid., Para. 1204.2.

[76] National Division Staff Meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, mimeographed, four pages.

[77] Ibid., p. 3.

[78] Ibid., p. 3.

The National Division recognizes the responsibility it has in the area of relations between the races, and its staff has taken seriously the mandate to serve all people regardless of race. In some instances, restrictive patterns still remain, in others policy changes and adoption of open-door policies have not resulted in extensive changes in practice.

---

[79] Ibid., p. 2. [80] Interview with Mary Lou Barnwell, op. cit.

[81] "Race Relations and the National Division," op. cit.

[82] Ibid., p. 1.

In other situations, Division institutions are playing a leadership role in their communities. Citation of some of the specific efforts of the Section of Home Fields will help us in our appraisal of its part in the total response of the Church.

(1) One of the most effective areas of support of interracial efforts is in aid to interracial, inner city parishes from the Department of City Work. One example of a church receiving such aid is the Central Methodist Church in Detroit, Michigan. The staff of a white church in the inner city held a summer vacation church school for neighborhood children, the great majority of whom were Negro, and about 200 children attended. The overwhelming response convinced the board of trustees of the Church of the possibilities of service available if the Church would open itself to the community. Now an interdenominational program has developed which offers a pre-school program, a hot breakfast program to children who often ate no breakfast, volunteer psychiatric, medical, and legal service provided by professionals donating a night each week, a tutorial program, and social services, such as family visitation and counseling. The National Division is providing $5,000 a year to the work of this program, which is also supported by the participating Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Baptist denominations.[83]

In another program, support is being given to an inner-city parish in East St. Louis, Illinois, where two integrated churches, one Negro church, a white church, and a community center are working together as one parish. The Division also provided $7,000 to the interdenominational Action Program in the Hough Area of Cleveland following the riots there in the summer of 1966. The present intention is to continue that assistance. At the present there are forty-seven interracial, inner-city church programs that are being supported by amounts of between one and seven thousand dollars per year. The general policy of the aid program is to offer aid for three years in decreasing amounts with the hope that the individual programs will become self-supporting after that time. This makes it possible to put funds into new situations. In certain situations, such as the Detroit program, funds will be provided on an extended basis.[84] The interracial, inner-city work supported by the National Division is one of the most effective of all efforts by the Church to provide interracial services. The importance of these efforts resides in the fact that continuing programs are established in areas where there is both the most tension and also the possibility of developing situations in which on-going relations between members of different races take place.

---

[83] Interview with Mary Lou Barnwell, op. cit.

(2) One of the most interesting projects being supported by the National Division is the Toulminville-Warren Street Methodist Parish in Mobile, Alabama. On June 5, 1966, the Toulminville church with a white congregation joined in a cooperative ministry with the Warren Street church with a Negro congregation. The cooperative ministry is using the

---

[84] Ibid.

Toulminville building as its center of operations. Since June, 1966, several things have happened. Almost all white members have left the church, even though they had voted to establish the cooperative ministry. Only one white member consistently attends, although other whites attend on occasion. A sizeable number of Negroes have now joined the Toulminville church, and three are now trustees of the church. The Negro and white ministers continue to work together, and a white and a Negro intern have been added to the staff to expand the work of the church.[85]

The Toulminville experiment is important for what it has done and what it reveals. As an attempt to develop an integrated Methodist church in the heart of the Deep South, it has virtually failed. The church is almost entirely Negro today and its expanding program serves Negroes almost entirely. The cooperative ministry, undertaken willingly and openly by members of both congregations, reveals some of the difficulties encountered by the Church, as well as other agencies, when it tries to change deep-seated community patterns of human relations. Financial and social pressures were brought on some of the members of the Church, and threats were made against the physical well-being of the minister and his family.[86] The minister stayed in the situation, but the white members lacked even the tenuous job security of the white minister.[87] Whites are continuing to support the church financially, especially for building indebtedness.

---

[85] Interview with Ernest V. May, Director, Department of City Work, Section of Home Fields, National Division of Board of Missions, Dec. 13, 1966.

[86] Ibid.

Although integration has not become a reality, the one attending white excepted, the Toulminville experiment has accomplished certain other things. The most important is that there are now Negro Methodists who are members of a Southeastern Jurisdiction church. Negroes have participated in some interracial camping and in some interracial sub-district meetings. Although the number of people involved in such encounters are minimal in terms of the total life of the Church in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, their membership and participation in that Jurisdiction represents a major transition. Bishop Goodsen has now stated that the West Florida-Alabama Conference is going to stay in Toulminville.[88]

The Board of Missions has played a significant role in support of the cooperative ministry since its inception and will continue to do so. The National Division is contributing $12,000 in the present year to

---

[87] Interview with Mary Lou Barnwell, op. cit. Miss Barnwell related an account of two other instances in which pressures in the form of threats of violence affected work toward interracial ministry programs. In South Carolina, plans for a larger parish comprised of a Negro and a white congregation were put off a year ago when the Ku Klux Klan became active. In North Carolina, a short term white missionary set up various interracial programs, such as a vacation church school, in conjunction with a local church and its minister. The minister left after threats were made against his children and wife. The missionary, a young woman, stayed, but has had shots fired at her car and has had her tires slashed. The violence has not driven her out, but Negroes have now stopped coming to the programs she has established because of fear.

[88] Interview with Ernest V. May, op. cit.

Toulminville-Warren Street cooperative ministry, largely for salary assistance for the two ministers and two interns. In addition, the Associate General Secretary of the National Division, J. Edward Carothers, sent a letter to 200 churches across the country trying to secure at least 100 churches that would contribute $100 each to the cooperative ministry in Mobile. The response was less than had been hoped for, but a few thousand dollars were collected in this fashion. Beyond the financial help that the letters were intended to secure, the attempt represents an effort on the part of the National Division to involve the whole church in this effort in Mobile.[89]

Today the Toulminville-Warren Street Methodist Parish has expanded its services to include a youth center, a Head Start project, and a planned interracial and inter-denominational hospital chaplaincy program. A youth opportunity school is using church facilities and a number of other programs are being planned.

(3) The National Division, in cooperation with the Board of Christian Social Concerns, recently held a five-day workshop on community organization in Chicago. Forty or fifty persons attended, many of them staff members of community centers supported by the National Division. This workshop represents a shift in emphasis in the National Division's efforts to move the Church closer to its goal of inclusiveness in Church and society because it means a major change from offering services on

---

[89] Form letter from J. Edward Carothers, Associate General Secretary, National Division of the Board of Missions, March 21, 1966.

a non-racial basis to attempts to change community patterns. Some National Division community centers have already undertaken such efforts either on their own or on an inter-denominational basis. The Division is presently working on a statement on community organization that will be voted on at the annual board meeting in January, 1967. The effectiveness of such efforts cannot be assessed as yet, but taken together with the Frogmore training session of the Woman's Division, it represents a major shift in emphasis and may prove to be one of the most far-reaching steps taken by any agency within the church.[90]

(4) The Department of Research and Survey of the Section of Home Fields has performed an important service to the Church by publication of the results of a number of research projects on various aspects of Church life and Negro-white relations. Four of the most important recent studies were a study of attitudes of northern Negroes toward the Methodist Church,[91] a study of the Peninsula and Delaware conference in preparation for merger,[92] a study on churches in urban settings where population changes are occurring,[93] and a progress report on inclusiveness in the

---

[90] Interview with Mary Lou Barnwell, *op. cit.*

[91] A study by The Center for Research in Marketing Incorporated, for the Department of Research and Survey, entitled, *The Image of The Methodist Church in the Negro Community*, (Philadelphia: 1965).

[92] Robert L. Wilson and James H. Davis, *Let's Get Acquainted,* (Philadelphia: 1965).

[93] Robert L. Wilson and James H. Davis, *The Church in the Racially Changing Community, op. cit.*

local church since conferences mergers have been consummated in the North.[94] These studies are valuable for the Church in that they provide a solid base of evidence on which future actions may be constructed.

(2.) Section of Church Extension

Paragraph 1206d of the Discipline states that one of the functions of the National Division of the Board of Missions is "To administer all donation aid, loan funds, and endowment, contributed and established for the work of church extension, except such as may be administered by the Jurisdictional and Annual Conferences."[95] The Section of Church Extension, with a ten man staff, has responsibility for encouraging "the erection of churches in communities not already adequately supplied."[96] To carry out its function it is authorized to raise and administer a loan fund, develop standards and procedures for site selection, and study and approve architectural plans and financial programs.[97] The magnitude of its operations becomes apparent from the statement by the Associate General Secretary, Bonneau P. Murphy, that in 1965 the Section made loans totaling more than $15,000,000.[98]

The importance of the Section of Church Extension for this study is that it plays a central role in the decision on where new churches will be located in a community. Paragraph 1204.2 of the Discipline reads, "The board (of Missions) and the several divisions thereof shall continue to perform their respective functions in harmony with the policy of The Methodist Church to eliminate discrimination based on color."[99] It would appear from that disciplinary statement that the Section has a twofold mandate: (1) to try to locate new churches in situations where bi-racial groups may be served, when that is possible, and (2) to require newly organized churches to record their intention to serve all people regardless of race. To date the Section of Church Extension has not taken steps to utilize its funds in such a way to insure that the stated goal of the Church and the stated requirement of the Discipline are carried out, although its Associate General Secretary has indicated that the Section is concerned with the matter and has the issue under study.[100]

---

[95] *Discipline*, 1964, *op. cit.*

[96] *Ibid.*, Para. 1246.1.

[97] *Ibid.*, Para. 1246.9.

[98] Bonneau P. Murphy, "Developing a Strategy," *The Methodist Story*, June, 1966, p. 8.

Evidence that the funds of the Section are not being used as effectively as they might be in implementing the Church's goal of inclusiveness comes from several sources. In "Race Relations and the National Division," the report of the National Division staff meeting cited earlier, Charles Nowlen of the Section on Church Extension said, "Most of the new church extension churches are in de facto segregated communities."[101] Ernest

---

[99] Discipline, 1964, op. cit.

[100] Letter from Bonneau P. Murphy, Assistant General Secretary, Section of Church Extension, Division of National Missions, Board of Missions, June 10, 1966.

[101] "Race Relations and the National Division," op. cit., p. 3.

May of the Department of City Work, which works closely with the Section of Church Extension, said that new aid would be granted if there was not a policy to exclude members of any race. However, he indicated that there is no requirement of a policy to serve on an integrated basis or even to have an open door policy.[102] He did go on to point out that the Section operates under the disciplinary requirements of Paragraphs 1820 and 1824. Paragraph 1820 is the Methodist Social Creed containing the general stance of The Methodist Church on many social issues. Paragraph 1824 is a General Conference resolution on The Methodist Church and Race which contains the basic affirmation of the Church on race and inclusiveness and which calls on church officials and members to offer services on a non-discriminatory basis and to support specific actions in the community. In particular, it calls on all pastors and church officials to maintain local church services, activities and church membership open to persons of all races.[103] Paragraph 1824 would appear to support positive action by the Section of Church Extension.

In February, 1966, at the Frogmore Conference mentioned earlier, sponsored by the Woman's Division of the National Division and the Division of Human Relation and Economic Affairs of the Board of Christian Social Concerns, critical attention was directed at the church extension practice of the Section in particular and throughout the Church in general. These points were made,

---

[102] Interview with Ernest V. May, Nov. 17, 1965.

[103] Discipline, 1964, op. cit.

> As the Frogmore Conference moved into the full implications of the inclusive church, we have been led to take a deeper and more critical look at the prevailing patterns in our boards of missions and church extension programs from the general board level down through those of our conferences and districts. We have been made aware, some of us for the first time, that the present pattern has tended and is continuing to perpetuate the segregation system at this strategic time in the history of The Methodist Church when we are in the process of merging the Central Jurisdiction and uniting with the Evangelical United Brethren Church.
>
> Therefore, the Frogmore Conference sincerely hopes that our National and conference boards will all feel compelled to reexamine our policies and rethink our pattern for locating churches with the intent of helping communities and churches become inclusive. Furthermore, we ask them to consider and use fair employment practices in the construction of all such churches.[104]

The Frogmore report went on to call for "examination of the relation between the use of church extension funds and the racial policies adopted by the General Conference," and, if necessary, the adoption of policies by the General Conference to insure that church extension funds are not used to perpetuate segregation; further, it called upon "Methodist congregations using church extension funds to work aggressively towards implementing the official Methodist policy of not using general board funds to perpetuate segregation in The Methodist Church;" it called upon the Section of Church Extension to consider the needs for new and existing churches in inner cities "in favor of investing in new churches in suburbia where it may be felt that a 'quick financial return' can be gained from the investment;" and it called upon church extension officials to keep in mind the new situations which will develop when mergers of Central Jurisdiction and regional jurisdictional conferences are merged.[105]

---

[104] *Findings*, Frogmore Conference, *op. cit.*

The evaluation of the existing situation in church extension policies and the specific suggestions made in the Frogmore Conference are exceedingly important for this study. Their importance lies in the fact that agencies within the Church, one of which is a Division of the Board of Missions, have seriously called into question practices of another agency in the Church. It may be presumed that the questions are based on a close understanding of what actual practices are. That the evaluation of the Frogmore report has some substance is evident from correspondence with Bonneau Murphy, the Assistant General Secretary of the Section of Church Extension. In a letter to Mr. Murphy, an inquiry was made about existing policy statements regarding church extension and race, or, if no policy statement existed, what efforts had been made. He responded that at that time, in June, 1966, "It does happen that we are at this time discussing the possibility of including a question in the application form for donations and loans with reference to the matter of inclusiveness in the local church." He indicated that the question might not be answered by the Board Managers until January, 1967.[106] He also included a letter that was to be sent to members of the Committee on Church Extension in which he proposed discussion on the question, "Does the church recognize its obligation to meet the Disciplinary provisions and recommendations for church membership and administration."[107] Mr. Murphy's letter confirmed that the Section was concerned with the question and was doing "everything within its power to promote the accepted ideals of The Methodist Church as enacted by the General Conference."[108] Apparently, in the light of the staff report made in 1965, the fact that the question of policy has not yet been settled, and the Frogmore report, there are powers beyond the control of the staff of the Section of Church Extension which mitigate against using the tremendous sums available for church extension to promote inclusiveness.

---

[105] *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

[106] Murphy Letter, *op. cit.*

One final word needs to be said about church extension. Paragraphs 1813.2e and 1813.4c of the Discipline give the Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations an explicit mandate to take steps to promote interracial brotherhood through church extension, along with other means. Correspondence with the Secretary of the Commission produced no indication that anything had been done in this area.[109] Further correspondence with the Section of Church Extension inquiring into what the Commission had done in this area brought the response, "The only reference to Church Extension will be found in the report to the 1964 General Conference."[110]

---

[107] Letter from Bonneau P. Murphy to the Members of the Committee on Church Extension, June 16, 1966.

[108] Murphy Letter, op. cit.

[109] Letter from D. Trigg James, Secretary of the Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations, November 15, 1966.

[110] Letter from D. R. Fletcher, Director, Section of Church Extension, National Division of the Board of Missions, November 28, 1966.

That report cited the directive to the Commission "to study the problem of church extension of the Central Jurisdiction, and also the matter of establishing new congregations characterized by interracial brotherhood." The report took note of the need for new, bi-racial congregations, especially in urban area of expanding and changing population. However, beyond urging "the gigantic forward step of planting new congregations and giving financial assistance for necessary church building projects on a church-wide basis," no steps were taken by the Commission to carry out its directive. Apparently it has taken no further action since 1964 on church extension.[111]

Thus far, we have discussed the Section of Home Fields and the Section of Church Extension separately. One recent action representing the entire National Division is of great importance in our understanding of what the Church is doing.

The National Division voted in September, 1966, to contribute $70,000 to the Delta Ministry Program of the National Council of Churches. The action is very important to Delta Ministry Program since it represents nearly twenty per cent of its total budget for 1966. Taken together with the $30,000 granted by the Woman's Division and $3,000 from the Board of Christian Social Concerns, the contribution from the National Division puts Methodist support at over twenty-five per cent of the budget for 1966. There are indications that the support will be continued. There has been opposition to the grant since it was announced, and the Division has put out some material explaining the Program and why it is to be supported.[112] Bishop Pendergass, the bishop serving the annual conferences of the Southeastern Jurisdiction in Mississippi, appeared before the board of the National Division and opposed the support of the Delta Ministry Program. He wanted an all-Methodist program in Mississippi. Bishop Love, the bishop serving the Central Jurisdiction annual conferences in Mississippi, strongly endorsed the program. Almost ninety-five per cent of the board approved the program.[113] This action is important because it is another sign of the willingness of agencies of the Church to get involved in controversial attempts to change community patterns. In Mississippi it is now supporting voter registration, welfare, educational, and community organization activities. The action is also significant in that only meager sums were allotted to the efforts of the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches during the years of its major activities in the South.

---

[111] Report and Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

One other important action taken by the National Division of the Board of Missions was the founding of the Metropolitan Urban Service Training Program (MUST) in New York City. The program, which began in 1964, is designed to develop various ways in which the Church in the city may minister in the midst of the multiple problems faced in the urban setting. Its major thrust thus far has been toward training laymen and clergy who are already involved in work of some sort in the New York City. MUST was conceived by the National Division, which financed the program for the first two years with an initial $500,000 grant. From the beginning, however, the program was intended to be an ecumenical operation, and staff and funds are now coming from other denominations and from non-church sources as well. The program, now two years old, is too young to assess. However, any program designed to cope with urban problems today of necessity is involved with race relations problems. The original initiative and the continued support of the National Division for the program indicates an important new direction. Programs designed to effect social change in the urban setting will affect race relations, and they may be more effective than programs whose focus is explicitly interracial confrontation and understanding.

---

[112] Under a cover letter from Gerald L. Clapsaddle, Associate General Secretary of the Joint Commission on Education and Cultivation, dated November, 1966, information on reasons why the National Division has decided to support the Delta Ministry, a financial statement of the Delta Ministry for 1966, and information on the Delta Ministry's program have been sent to Church leaders at all levels of the Church.

[113] Interview with Mary Lou Barnwell, op. cit.

The work of the National Division is divided into two major sections. Thus far, the potential of the Section of Church Extension has not been utilized to move the Church closer to inclusiveness. On the contrary, there is some indication that Church extension funds have helped perpetuate patterns of segregation. The staff has been cognizant of the problem, but it must follow policies established by a board with national representation. It may be fair to assume that we have here another indication of the neutralizing effect of national membership on Church action. However, many Church Extension projects are in the North. Perhaps the concern for protection of investment, suggested in The Frogmore report, operates here as a negative influence on planned use of church extension funds to create inclusiveness.

It can be readily seen that of all of the efforts thus far analyzed, including the annual conferences, the bishops, and other agencies, the efforts of the Section of Home Fields have the greatest potential for impact on patterns of exclusiveness in the society as over against patterns of exclusiveness in the Church. Furthermore, most of the work supported by the National Division has an on-going nature which most likely will have more long-term effect than one-shot conferences of study groups.[114] The support for the Delta Ministry Program and the move toward community organization efforts indicates a willingness to get involved in efforts to change community patterns. Although such work is tedious and bears little fruit in the short run, it has more potential than statements of concern or numberless conferences to bring about change in the long run.

Although we must recognize the importance of the efforts now being made by the Section of Home Fields, we must take note of the fact that with the exception of the important work through its institutions, all of the cited efforts are of very recent origin. Furthermore, many of the institutions of the National Division were operating on a segregated basis until recently, and community organization efforts cited above are new departures. There has been a history of work for Negroes by some institutions, but relatively little has been done on an interracial basis until the present. The Department of City Work held a Consultation on The Inclusive Church in 1959.[115] Other than that, no special efforts in the area of race were cited by Division personnel when questioned about past efforts.

---

[114] See George E. Simpson and J. Milton Yinger, Racial and Cultural Minorities, op. cit., chapters 22 and 23 for a full discussion of methods of changing prejudiced persons.

Selected Boards and Agencies

Thus far we have considered those boards and agencies of The Methodist Church which are either delegated particular responsibility in the area of race or whose work almost in its entirety plays a central role in shaping the implementation of the Methodist goal of inclusiveness in Church and society. There are numerous other boards and agencies whose work, taken together, is important for race relations. We are going to treat a number of them in turn in somewhat summary fashion, dealing with major policy formulations and kinds of actions taken. This course is going to be followed for several reasons: (1) in the case of the many major publications of the agencies of the Church, and the Board of Education in particular, the material is so vast that it would require a separate study in itself. Such a study would require careful analysis of every editorial, article, and study material for the twenty-five years since Union. (2) In many cases, specific information on hiring, promotion, and extension of service was not made available to the author of this study. In these instances, board personnel referred me to the official survey of Methodist institutions undertaken by the Department of Research of the Council on World Service and Finance. That study, completed in 1965 and printed in January, 1966, has not yet been released for public usage. (3) Much needed material for this section is not available in print, and thus it has been necessary to rely heavily on correspondence with board personnel. Correspondence is helpful in providing background for a summary statement, but it cannot in itself serve as adequate basis for hard analysis. (4) The intention of this study is to present a picture of the total response of The Methodist Church to the present racial crisis in the United States. In conjunction with other portions of this study, a summary of the policies which have been formulated and the kinds of actions which have been taken will complete the picture required for our analysis.

---

[115] Report on Consultation on The Inclusive Church, November 18-19, 1959, Gary, Indiana, (Philadelphia: Department of City Work, n. d.)

(1) The Board of Education

The purpose of the Board of Education is stated in the Discipline as follows,

> Christian education has its roots in the nature of the Christian gospel itself. Jesus is frequently called Master or Teacher, and he is the authority in our church's program of Christian nurture. His Great Commission is: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always." The pur-

> pose of Christian education is to learn, to teach, and to use his way by which persons of all ages are related through Jesus Christ to God as Father and to all men as brothers.[116]

Every major denomination has developed a comprehensive program of education in order to spread the teachings of the Gospel and perpetuate its own traditions. Since the great majority of new church members come from families with church membership and are products of church schools, the educational programs of the Church play a central role in formation of Christian beliefs and the position of the Church on crucial issues. For example, some denominations are known for their historic position on war and peace, others for their attitudes toward mechanization, and others for their attitudes on such issues as birth control, gambling, divorce, smoking, and drinking. The maintenance of a traditional position is to some extent attributable to the success of the church education programs. It is recognized, of course, that perpetuation of historic beliefs through church schools would have little chance of success without full support of parents. We are interested in policies formulated by the Board of Education because of the importance of the educational process on the one hand, and because the policies and practices of the Board of Education on race have come under fire from other sectors in the Church in the past.[117]

---

[116] Discipline, 1964, op. cit., Para. 1324.

[117] The Southern California-Arizona Conference called upon the Curriculum Committee of the Board of Education to use more pictures demonstrating inclusiveness and more pictorial representation of non-caucasians in church school literature in 1958 and 1960. See Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1958, pp. 127-8, and Journal of the Southern California-Arizona Conference, 1960, p. 149.

The most important single issue for our concern is the present policy of the Board of Education on content of educational materials in regard to race. In response to a request for a statement of policy, Walter N. Vernon of the Editorial Division supplied the author with a copy of a statement which has been formulated as a guide for the editors. He said that the policy has not been formally approved by the General Board of Education, but suggested that the policy would be approved if such sanction were sought. The statement is a "guideline for policy as formulated by the General Secretary of the Editorial Division and his staff."[118] The two-page statement, entitled, "Statement about the Use of Pictures of Persons of Various Races in our Publications," is a response to inquiries, or complaints, about the use of persons of various racial groups in Church publications. Such pictures are supported on the basis of multi-racial membership and concern for all kinds of persons, the importance of representation of all membership groups in publications, and the need for members of the increasing number of interracial churches to find interracial group pictured in Church literature. The statement concludes with the following two paragraphs,

> The practices outlined above are conceived to be in harmony with the basic position of The Methodist Church as set forth in many actions of the General Conference. Methodist church school literature is published with a conscious intention of

---

[118] Letter from Walter N. Vernon, Administrative Associate and Editor, General Publications, Editorial Division of the Board of Education, May 27, 1966.

> teaching the doctrinal and moral positions of The Methodist Church as they appear in the Methodist *Discipline* and in the actions of the General Conference.
>
> It should be recognized by all who use our material that The Methodist Church is not an authoritarian church in that it seeks to control or to coerce all its members into conformity with every aspect of Methodist doctrine and ethics. We are committed to a policy of "live and let live" and we believe in freedom to differ and to express those differences in Christian love.[119]

It is interesting that the statement combines the "conscious intention" to teach the moral position of the Church with the recognition that the Church does not attempt "to control or to coerce" conformity with doctrine and ethics. The latter paragraph must be considered in the light of protests that have been received by the Board of Education for the use of pictures of Negroes and of Negroes and whites together.[120] Although it is undoubtedly true that conformity on ethics cannot be coerced, a "live and let live" policy hardly appears to be consonant with "a conscious intention of teaching the doctrinal and moral positions of The Methodist Church."

The question of the degree to which the Editorial Division is attempting to spread the Methodist position on race is not answered by the statement itself.[121] Vernon suggests that a new policy was inaugurated in 1964 as he writes that an assessment of the response from within the Church would require analysis of letters and church resolutions of protest or commendation in the last two years.[122] There is no question that Methodist educational materials, and periodicals generally, are carrying articles and pictures on Negroes and Negro-white relations today,[123] although the extent to which such material is included in all levels of teaching material would require much further analysis.

---

[119] "Statement about the Use of Pictures of Persons of Various Races in Our Publications," two pages, mimeographed, n. d.

[120] Vernon Letter, *op. cit.*

[121] A statement made by Walter Vernon in an interview with Herbert Stotts of Boston University in connection with the study Methodist Social Thought and Action (MESTA) that resulted in the four volume *Methodism and Society* series throws doubt on the leadership position of the Editorial Division. He said, "Decisions in our Board having to do with major policy changes come by consensus of the staff in response to crisis situations. When it comes to basic policy changes we tend to 'just drift into them.' We

Vernon points out in his letter that educational materials have always included study materials on racial brotherhood and human relations.[124] He cites a number of unit titles from the 1940 to support the statement. Further support is found in the fact that the Division of the Local Church of the Board of Education had a special program on race relations from 1943 to 1950, held conferences on civil rights in various parts of the country, and published numerous articles on aspects of race

---

get our direction from the Curriculum Committee, especially the publication 'Outline for Curriculum.''' Interview with Walter Vernon, July 29, 1959, MESTA files, Boston University.

[122] Vernon Letter, op. cit.

[123] One need only read through the Methodist Periodical Index from 1960 to 1965 to see the vast increase in articles relating to racial matters in all types of periodicals. Not all educational materials are indexed, but magazines of various sorts designed especially for college students, church school teachers, or adult classes are included, and they have increasingly carried articles on race.

[124] Vernon Letter, op. cit.

relations' problems.[125] There appears to be evidence that the Board of Education has in the past, and is now, attempting to speak on the issue of race. There also appears to be evidence, however, that the board required some prodding to support inclusiveness in its publications in recent years.[126]

Questions were posed to Board of Education staff members about employment practices of the Board. Myron Wicke, the General Secretary, said that the Board follows Disciplinary requirements on engaging personnel of all races and referred me to the study practices of Methodist institutions.[127] Walter Vernon stated that the Editorial Division has Negro secretaries and had a Negro staff person. He indicated that efforts to find Negro staff persons have not been successful. Boards and agencies may experience problems similar to those met in recruiting qualified Negro clergymen.[128] There are more openings than applicants.

---

[125] The MESTA files contain correspondence and materials from the Division of the Local Church indicating that Doris P. Dennison and R. B. Eleazer set up a variety of conferences on race relations in the 1940's and Eleazer wrote a number of articles on race. MESTA files, folder on Division of the Local Church, Adult Department, Dennison File and articles by Eleazer.

[126] We have already cited the Southern California-Arizona Conference action, Supra, note 112. Peggy Billings of the Woman's Division of the Board of Missions commented on the need for Methodist women to go outside the Church to get involved in race relations after the 1954 Supreme Court Decision. The pressure from conferences for the Board of Education to include material on racial matters and to support the Church position, in the light of the fact that there were earlier programs, may suggest that as tension increased after 1954 pressures in the Church mitigated against strong action by the Board of Education.

[127] Letter from Myron F. Wicke, General Secretary of the Division of Higher Education of the Board of Education, May 26, 1966.

One very important phase of the work of the Board of Education in relation to race is the Negro college program. It will be recalled that after the Civil War, the northern Church sent missionaries and teachers South to start schools. Today there are thirteen Negro Colleges that are related to The Methodist Church and receive substantial support from it.[129] Some people argue that the continuation of such schools perpetuates segregation in society. Strong arguments are made in defense of the schools in terms of the need they fill in a situation in which many schools will not accept Negroes, or more than a token few, and many Negroes have not been adequately prepared for academic life in predominantly white schools. Until secondary education for Negroes is improved and until all schools are open on a non-discriminatory basis, Negro Colleges will play an important role. Support for Negro Colleges can not be equated with support for the Methodist position on inclusiveness, but it is an indication of a continuing commitment on the part of the Church to work with Negroes.

---

[128] The burden of a recent study is that the number of Negroes being recruited into the ministry, for Negro and predominantly white denominations alike, is far below the needs even for replacement of those leaving the ministry through death, retirement, and withdrawal. It may be that Negroes are at present hesitating to take any position with churches. See J. H. Graham, The Development of Negro Leadership for the Christian Ministry, (New York: National Division of the Board of Missions, 1965), 34 pages.

[129] Church School, July, 1966, p. 7.

One further part of the work of the Board of Education that must be considered is the Methodist Student Movement. The MSM, which is under the Division of Higher Education, is a national organization of Methodist students with chapters on many college campuses. motive magazine, a publication of The Methodist Student Movement has long published articles on controversial social issues, including race. It has published a number of articles related to the Central Jurisdiction dispute within the Church. The National Council of the MSM is an elected body of representatives that formulates policy and establishes programs to be carried out by the Movement or by chapters. The MSM has generally been critical of foot-dragging within the Church and has taken a progressive position on changes in society. However, it has been affected by the changes that have occurred in recent years in the nation as were the annual conferences. Thus, in 1961, the MSM constituted a biracial study committee to study the MSM and then the jurisdictional problem,[130] recommended extensive studies of sit-in movements and Civil Rights groups and procedures,[131] and suggested financial support of civil rights movements and participation in their efforts on the part of individuals.[132] By 1965 the tenor had changed, and the prime concerns were with revolution in society.[133] Proposed plans related to race included involvement in civil rights organizations,[134] attempts to integrate universities,[135] and the initiation of community organization projects involved with "social change."[136]

---

[130] Minutes of the National Conference of The Methodist Student Movement, 1960, p. 56.

[131] Ibid., pp. 57-8.

[132] Ibid., p. 59.

[133] Minutes, 1965, p. 8.

The MSM has established a community organization program in Morristown, New Jersey, and there are plans to begin more such projects. Objections were raised by local Methodist officials and Bishop Taylor of New Jersey, and funds for the Morristown project for the summer of 1966 were cut off. At the same time, the Division of Higher Education and the National Division of the Board of Missions, the supporting agencies, did offer to support two students who might work with the Peoples' Action Committee in Morristown, and stated that consideration would be given to a program for 1967. The effect of this action was to cut the number of MSM personnel who would be given support from fifteen to two. It is an indication of the kinds of problems that arise when a forceful group, unbound to traditions and local pressures, moves in to change patterns.[137]

The MSM, through action and through motive, has taken a forthright stand and has raised a strong voice. The groups has relatively little power, however, since its constituency is widespread, little organized, and is constantly changing as students graduate. In consequence, many of its formulated programs do not go beyond the formulation stage and its effectiveness is largely dissipated.

---

[134] Ibid., p. 9. [135] Ibid., p. 10.

[136] Ibid., p. 24.

[137] Letter from Gerald Clapsaddle, Associate General Secretary of the Joint Commission on Education and Cultivation, and Myron Wicke, General Secretary of the Division of Higher Education of the Board of Education, to the staff of the Morris County Project, June, 1966.

(2) Board of Evangelism

The Discipline formulates the purpose of evangelistic work as follows,

> The aim of evangelism is to bring all men into living, active fellowship with God through Jesus Christ as divine Savior and through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit; to gather them into the fellowship of the Church; to lead them to express their Christian discipleship in every area of human life that the kingdom of God may be realized.[138]

We have already noted that the work of the National Division and the work of the Board of Missions and the Board of Evangelism are closely parallel. Mission work, however, is done through a variety of institutions, churches, schools, homes, and community centers which make their impact felt through their work in particular areas. The work of the Board of Evangelism is more directly related to the confrontation of individuals with the Gospel of Christ through preaching, literature, and radio and TV. The Board of Evangelism is directed to promote programs of evangelism in all of the annual conferences.[139]

Our major concern with the work of the Board of Evangelism centers on two thrusts: (1) efforts which have been made to increase the Negro membership of The Methodist Church, and (2) efforts which have been made to further the Church's goal of inclusvieness. Commentary here will benefit by being put in perspective with the facts of Negro membership since Union. There are two bases of measurement, the membership of the Central Jurisdiction and the Negro members in other jurisdictions. The Central Jurisdiction figures are only significant until 1964, after that date mergers with other jurisdictions distort all figures. The most complete analysis of membership figures in the Church was done by Frederick Shippey in a study prepared for the Commission of 70. The study covered the seventeen years from 1940 to 1957. In that period, Central Jurisdiction membership grew 17.1 per cent. The entire Church increased its membership by 30.4 per cent in this period. The lowest increase in the regional jurisdictions was 22.7 per cent in the Northeastern Jurisdiction.[140] The Central Jurisdiction membership has grown only slightly since 1957. In that year, Shippey reported the figure as 361,388.[141] In 1960 the figure had grown to 367,340[142] and in 1964 it was 373,595.[143] While the total Church membership grew 6.5 per cent in the period from 1957 to 1964,[144] the Central Jurisdiction grew only 3.3 per cent.

---

[138] Discipline, 1964, op. cit. Para. 1464.

[139] Ibid., Para. 1469.

Several factors may account for the small amount of growth in the Central Jurisdiction since Union. First, many Negroes have migrated North from the South, and they have generally settled in cities where there are no Central Jurisdiction churches. They have either joined other denominations, perhaps one of the Negro Methodist denominations, or they have become "unchurched."[145] Also, a number of large Central Jurisdiction churches have transferred to other jurisdictions. Second, many Negroes have moved to Western cities where there are no Central Jurisdiction churches. Third, the continuation of the Central Jurisdiction as a segregated structure may have mitigated against new membership from the Negro population outside the Methodist Church. The segregated structure of the Central Jurisdiction has been cited by Central Jurisdiction spokesmen as a barrier to the Church in its efforts to evangelize among Negroes.[146]

---

[140] Selected Work Documents, op. cit., p. 56.

[141] Ibid., p. 58.

[142] General Minutes of the Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church, 1960, p. 680.

[143] General Minutes of the Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church, 1964, p. 873.

[144] Ibid., p. 940.

---

[145] George H. Jones, Director, Department of Area and Conference Evangelism of the Board of Evangelism, supports the view that Negro Methodists moving North join one of the Negro denominations. In part, he sees this as a result of the fact that there are few Negro congregations of The Methodist Church in the North, and he notes the fact that integration efforts in particular congregations in the North have not been very successful. Letter, May 19, 1966. A Report of the Department of Special Activities of the Board of Evangelism, which directs most of the evangelistic work of the Board in the Central Jurisdiction, cites transfer of large churches to other Jurisdictions and the large exodus of members from South to North and rural to urban settings as problems hampering evangelistic efforts. See"Department publication," 1963, p. G-6. Although the transfer of even one large church out of the Central Jurisdiction may offset a one to three per cent gain in total members, only small gains were registered in any year since 1957, and few transfers occurred until after 1960.

[146] The argument that the segregated Central Jurisdiction structure mitigates against all evangelistic efforts of the Church among Negroes has been called into question recently by a study done for the National Division of the Board of Missions on "The Image of The Methodist Church in the Negro Community." Supra, p. 467. This study found that most respondents viewed the Negro Methodist churches, such as the AME, AME-Zion, and CME, as all part of The Methodist Church. Only one person mentioned the Central Jurisdiction.

In 1964 there were approximately 125,000 non-whites in the Church who held membership in churches in regional jurisdictions. The bulk of these are in large Negro churches in northern cities. There are no precise figures on how many are in interracial situations, although the number is small.

The correspondence from the Board of Evangelism indicated that the major efforts directed toward Negroes were evangelistic programs undertaken in conjunction with the Central Jurisdiction. For many years the Board had a special Department of Negro Work headed by a Negro. It was reported that the department name was requested by the man who headed it up,[147] James W. Golden. His successor, W. D. Lester, also a Negro, is now director of the Board's Department of Special Activities. His work has been primarily in the Central Jurisdiction, although not entirely.

Reported evangelistic efforts directed at inclusiveness included interracial evangelistic meetings[148] and the sponsorship of legislation now included in the *Discipline* that all persons, regardless of "race, color, national origin, or economic condition" shall be eligible to attend worship services, to participate in church programs, and to be admitted to church membership when appropriate vows have been taken.[149] The latter action is probably the most important for this study in terms of what it reveals. First, it is apparent that legislation was requested in 1964 because some churches were using race as a bar to attendance at worship and membership. Second, since evangelism is finally the responsibility of the local church, even when programs are initiated by the Board of Evangelism or the annual conference, efforts by the national board are useful only when local churches are willing to accept members of all races. There is little evidence there is such willingness on a wide scale in either the North or South.[150]

---

[147] Jones Letter, *op. cit.* [148] *Ibid.*

[149] *Ibid.* Also see *Discipline*, 1964, *op. cit.*, Para. 106.1.

The Board of Evangelism has always carried on evangelistic programs to all racial groups, in this country and abroad. There is little evidence, however, that particularly strong efforts have been made to develop inclusiveness. No mention was made of any special efforts in literature sent out by the Board to support efforts toward inclusiveness. There is probably little that the Board of Evangelism can do in fact to change local patterns, and thus its success with minority group members, especially Negroes, is dependent on changes that occur at the local level. In its own practices, the Board maintains that it has open hiring and offers its services on an open basis.

(3) Board of Publication

The Methodist Publishing House, operated under the Board of Publication is an important service agency of the Church with chief responsibility for printing and distribution of all types of printed material. Our primary interest in this agency is in any affect it may have on the content or availability of Church literature dealing with racial matters. A secondary area of interest is employment policy and practice in regard to Negroes. Correspondence with The Methodist Publishing House included inquiries for information on policies "concerning content of materials published designed to implement the Church's stated goal for Church and society," policy statements regarding hiring and promotion practices, information on any special materials published to help implement the Church's goal of inclusiveness, and any comment on reaction to actions by The Publishing House.[151]

---

[150] Jones Letter, op. cit. Also see Dwight W. Culver, Negro Segregation in The Methodist Church, op. cit. and "Report" of the Inter-agency Consultation on Local Church Racial Inclusiveness, op. cit.

The reply from The Methodist Publishing House treated the matter of content by referring to the House's role as publisher, distributor, and printer for The Methodist Church. It was said that policy statements concerning content of materials published had doubtless been published for other boards and agencies. Paragraph 1122 of the Discipline sets forth the object of The Publishing House, and it was cited as evidence of the proper role of the Publishing House in the achievement of the goal of inclusiveness. That paragraph defines the task in such a way that it supports the understanding of The Publishing House as a service agency. Apparently no policy has been formulated on content, and none might be expected in terms of the task of the Publishing House as set forth in correspondence and Paragraph 1122.

---

[151] Letter to Lovick Pierce, President and Publisher, The Methodist Publishing House, October 20, 1966.

However, Paragraph 1143 of the *Discipline* sets out the duties of the Book Editor, elected quadrennially by the Board of Publication, and this paragraph suggests that he may determine the content of various publications. Paragraph 1143 gives the Book Editor authority to approve manuscripts, edit all books published, and edit the quarterly *Religion in Life.* In addition, he may collaborate with the editor of church-school publications "whenever such collaboration is necessary or desired."[152] The reply from The Publishing House indicated that the editor of the periodical *Together* is "answerable" to the Board of Publication.[153] The responsibilities of the Book Editor and the relation of the Board of Publication to the editor of *Together* indicate that actions of the Book Editor or the Board of Publication do affect content of certain materials. No indication was given that any effort has been made to establish a policy concerning such materials, nor that any special effort had been made to implement the goal of inclusiveness through such materials. Study of all published materials under the control of the Book Editor and the Board of Education might reveal that there is a policy in fact, or that the policy followed has tended to promote or hinder the attempt to achieve inclusiveness. We can only cite the fact that neither policy nor special efforts were referred to in the reply from The Publishing House.

---

[152] *Discipline*, 1964, *op. cit.*, Para. 1143.

[153] Letter from Charles A. Britton, Jr., Vice-President in charge of Personnel and Public Relations Division of The Methodist Publishing House, November 3, 1966.

Information was supplied on employment policy and practice. The Policy Manual of The Publishing House includes the following statement on Race and National Origin,

> In the selection of such persons as are needed to carry forward the work of The Methodist Publishing House, race and national origin of the applicant are not to be factors for consideration. The House will neither offer nor refuse employment to any person because of race or national origin.[154]

It was reported that integration had been in process at The Publishing House "long before the national spotlight was thrown on this movement." Since attention has been focused on civil rights, applications from Negroes and member employed have increased. In November, 1966, 13 per cent of the employees of the Publishing House, dispersed through all job levels, were Negro.[155] Further study of history and practices in the Publishing House would be necessary before any comment could be made on inclusiveness at various personnel levels. It is important that a statement has been adopted and that a significant per cent of the employees are Negroes.

---

[154] Ibid.

[155] Ibid. We have noted before the charges by the New York Conference leveled at the retail outlet store of The Methodist Publishing House in New York for its failure to use Negroes in retail sales positions. Supra p. 238 and p. 270. The matter was never fully resolved, because the response indicated a good percentage of Negroes but did not speak to the question of public contact. Types of jobs, possibility for promotion, percentage in terms of local labor market, etc. are all questions that are unanswered by a simple rebuttal to any charges of segregation, and it does provide a basis for further examination.

(4) Board of Pensions

Our concern in this study with the Board of Pensions is directed entirely at its investment policies and practices. The main function of the Board of Pensions is to take necessary action to establish a fund for the "support, relief, assistance, and pensioning of Methodist ministers and their families" and designated other persons.[156] Over the years a large investment fund has been accumulated, the proceeds of which are used to help defray the variety of financial demands made on the Board of Pensions.

In 1963, the Board of Pensions was one of the sponsoring agencies of the Second Methodist Conference on Human Relations. The "Message" from that Conference made a number of specific recommendations for action by Church agencies and personnel, and two of them referred directly to the investment activities of the Board of Pensions. The Conference called upon the business administrators of the Church,

> 1) To utilize the potential of investment funds, e. g. those of the Board of Pensions, to achieve integrated communities through the instrumentality of Public Law 221. d3.
>
> 2) To review its holdings and banking procedures for the purpose of developing a program of investment only with companies having non-discriminatory policies.[157]

Correspondence directed to Clair C. Hoyt, the General Secretary of the Board of Pensions, requested information on Board investment policies and practices, especially in regard to the recommendations of the Second Human Relations Conference of which it had been a sponsor. Information was also sought concerning the magnitude of the financial operation of the Board of Pensions. In his reply, Hoyt said that the Board had been aware of the "Message" and other pronouncements that have been made on investment policies. He gave assurance that the members and directors of the Board are a "conscientious and dedicated group of Methodist laymen and ministers" and that the administrators are "conscious of the conscience or religious pulse of the Church."[158] He went on to comment on specific policies and practices in the following manner,

---

[156] Discipline, 1964, op. cit., Para. 1604.

[157] "Message" from the Second Human Relations Conference, op. cit.

> Furthermore, investments in stock are in corporations which are subject to federal fair employment regulations. Our mortgage service agencies operate without restriction as to race. Some have a long history of operations on this basis. They have been appraised of our position in this respect.
>
> You request 'policies' as though they were written plans. Policies with us are practices made effectual in continuous operations. The investment committee frequently considers in its discussion these factors as well as other matters related to the specifically religious conscience.[159]

We need to make two comments about Hoyt's response. First, what he says about specific practices would indicate compliance with the recommendation from the Second Human Relations Conference that investment be done selectively with those companies which have non-discriminatory policies. It would be interesting in assessing leadership to know if such practice preceded the drive in the early 1960's by the Federal Government to get business and industry to subscribe to fair employment standards. It would also be informative to know if investment has been withdrawn from any company because of lack of compliance with non-discriminatory standards. However, the fact that the Board of Pensions does maintain a selective investment policy is important in terms of the impact the Church may make on the community. The second comment that needs to be made is that nothing was said about the recommendation to use funds to achieve integrated communities through the instrumentality of Public Law 221(d)(3).

---

[158] Letter from Claire C. Hoyt, General Secretary of the Board of Pensions, December 23, 1966.

[159] *Ibid.*

Public Law 221(d)(3) is a section of the National Housing Act under which the Federal Housing Administration insures mortgages on housing designed to help "families whose income is too high for public housing, but not high enough to compete for adequate housing in the private market."[160] The law is not specifically designed to create integrated communities, but it is geared at low and moderate income families, some of which have been displaced by urban renewal projects, and in its operation it would have the effect of promoting integration. The interest rate on mortgages under 221(d)(3) are lower than might be obtained through other mortgage or non-mortgages. All housing built under 221(d)(3) must be made available without discrimination because of race, color, creed, or national origin.[161]

---

[160] "Consumer Bulletin FHA Mortgage Insurance," Washington, D. C. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1966.

[161] Ibid.

The most important effect of investment in 221(d)(3) projects by The Methodist Church is that it would promote integrated housing while providing aid to an income group that is caught between existing government programs and high market costs. Another important factor in such an investment would be the expressed willingness of The Methodist Church to commit funds to support its stated goal of inclusiveness with full knowledge that such investment would mean reduced financial return. Hoyt's letter makes no reference to the specific request for policies formulated in response to the Second Human Relations Conference recommendation, or, in lieu of such policy, information as to whether the issue had been discussed and any reasons that had been given for rejection of such action. Again the question arises as to how committed the Church is to its expressed goal of inclusiveness in Church and society. Action on the recommendation concerning 221(d)(3) might have been one of the most important instances of action directed to inclusiveness in society. The responsibility to pensioners and dependents must be fulfilled, but the recommendation from the Second Human Relation Conference apparently assumes that that responsibility would not be jeopardized.

(5) The Board of Hospitals and Homes

In carrying out its traditional many-faceted ministry to the needy of all kinds, The Methodist Church maintains or supports a large number of hospitals and homes throughout the country. The 1966 Directory of Hospitals and Homes of The Methodist Church, reveals that 80 hospitals, 146 homes for the aging, 52 homes for children and youth, and two homes for business women are presently receiving support from The

Methodist Church.[162] The hospitals served 1,894,162 persons, the homes for the aging served over 20,000 residents, the homes for business women served 59 women, and the agencies for children and youth served over 7,000 children.

It is quite apparent from the figures cited on agencies and persons served that the racial policies and practices by the Board and by hospitals, homes, and agencies related to it would play a significant part in the effort of the Church to demonstrate its commitment and achieve inclusiveness. Unfortunately, no hard evidence is available on present Board policy or on the policies and practices of its agencies. The response to a request for such information was a referral to the aforementioned study on Methodist agencies which has not yet been made public.

Two items give us basis for some comment. First, as we have noted before, Bishop Alton, Vice-President of the Board of Hospitals and Homes, stated in address to the National Association of Methodist Hospitals and Homes in 1964 that the mores of the community, expediency, and social acceptability have been the guiding rules in the practices of the church generally, and hospitals and homes imparticular.[163] Second, the Discipline, as a result of General Conference action in 1964, now carries a modest statement directed at all hospitals and homes stating that they are "urged" to serve all persons regardless of race.[164] These two items taken together present an interesting picture. Within one month of the time that an officer of the Board, who is a bishop of the Church, indicated in an address that church agencies were following local patterns rather than the official position of the Church, the General Conference of the Church passed legislation "urging" the agencies to bring practice into line with principle. Although we lack hard evidence, it would appear safe to assume that the mild General Conference statement has not been sufficient to overcome the penetrating effects of local customs and pressure. It would appear that in this important area of ministry there is much work to be done to bring practice into conformity with the Church's professed principle. Until such work is done, agencies which do segregate not only fail to implement the goal of inclusiveness, but they perpetuate the very patterns the Church is committed to remove.

---

[163] Supra, p. 370

[164] Discipline, 1964, op. cit., Para. 1565.

(6) Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations

At each of the last three quadrennial meetings of the General Conference, a special study Commission has been appointed to deal with jurisdictional problems. The first of these Commissions, the Commission of 70, was given a mandate to study the entire jurisdictional system. The problem of the Central Jurisdiction was an important factor in the initiation of the study, and the Commission of 70 recognized the integral relation of regional autonomy and race in the Church. The Commission of 36, appointed in 1960, was given a task which focused solely on the manifold problems in the Church related to race. In its hands was put "The continuing program of The Methodist Church to abolish the Central Jurisdiction, promote interracial brotherhood through Christian love, and achieve a more inclusive church. . ."[165] Although specific tasks were assigned to the Commission of 36 related to such things as practices of Church agencies and establishment of interracial congregations through church extension programs, the Commission devoted almost all of its attention to the problem of abolishing the Central Jurisdiction. We have already discussed the Plan of Action that resulted in Chapter Three.

The Commission of 24 is the successor to the Commission of 36. The mandate of the present Commission, as outlined in the Discipline duplicates all that was included in the task assigned to the Commission of 36, but goes beyond it in two important particulars.[166] It is charged with the responsibility of evolving an over-all plan designed to achieve a racially inclusive fellowship at all levels of the church's life,[167] and it is directed to draft a plan for termination of the Central Jurisdiction if by September 1, 1967 this has not been accomplished under the provisions of the Plan of Action adopted in 1964.[168]

An inquiry was directed to the Secretary of the Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations, D. Trigg James, Jr., seeking information on what the Commission has done in the two years since 1964 to fulfill its mandate. The reply indicated that steps which have been taken to develop an inclusive Church could be found in the report made to the special session of the General Conference, which was held in conjunction with the Evangelical United Brethren Church to discuss merger of the two denominations.[169] The proposals contained in the report are based upon events that have occurred since the General Conference of 1964. Since the General Conference of 1964, arrangements already in process for merger of Central Jurisdiction annual conferences within the boundaries of the Northeastern and North Central Jurisdictions with annual conferences in those jurisdictions were completed. One Central Jurisdiction annual conference has merged with the South Central Jurisdiction annual conferences in Missouri. The South Central and Southeastern Jurisdictions voted to approve transfer of the twelve remaining Central Jurisdiction annual conferences into the regional jurisdiction in which they lie, but the Central Jurisdiction has thus far refused to permit such transfer without an agreed upon date for merger. The Central Jurisdiction has also rejected merger of annual conferences within the Southeastern Jurisdiction in two cases where it was voted by the annual conferences involved.[170] In the light of these changes, the Commission report contains three major proposals:

---

[165] "Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction," *op. cit.*, p. 1.

[166] *Discipline*, 1964, *op. cit.*, Para. 1813.

[167] *Ibid.*, Para. 1813. 5. [168] *Ibid.*, Para. 1813. 9.

(1) The first proposal consisted of a series of recommendations intended to result in abolition of the Central Jurisdiction through the use of Amendment IX and the Plan of Action adopted in 1964. The recommen-

---

[169] Letter from D. Trigg James, Recording Secretary and Administrative Secretary, Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations, Nov. 15, 1966.

[170] Daily Christian Advocate, November 8, 1966, p. 767.

dations call for the approval of merger agreements already adopted concerning two of the annual conferences of the Central Jurisdiction and transfer of the remaining ten Central Jurisdiction conferences. All of these actions would be completed by 1968 and the Central Jurisdiction would thus be abolished.[171]

(2) The second proposal takes the form of a "Resolution for the Elimination of Racial Structure and the Development of Greater Understanding and Brotherhood in The Methodist Church." Adoption of the resolution by each Annual Conference, each Jurisdictional Conference, the General Conference, each College of Bishops, and the Council of Bishops involves a pledge by each adopting body to put forth their "best efforts" toward elimination of all forms of racial structure in the Church and the development of brotherhood. The resolution contains a number of component parts obligating adopting bodies to take specific actions, such as provision of equal opportunities in all annual conference programs, assignment of bishops across racial lines, and the abolition of all structural segregation by 1972.[172]

(3) The third proposal involves some necessary refinements and extensions of provisions of the Temporary General Aid Fund established in 1964 for pension and minimum salary aid. Certain inequities have developed and certain unforeseen needs have arisen.[173]

Several Comments need to be made about the proposals made by the Commission of 24 and the likelihood of achievement of abolition of the

---

[171] Ibid., p. 768.

[172] Ibid., pp. 769-70.

[173] Ibid., pp. 770-74.

Central Jurisdiction and racial inclusiveness in Church programs by the suggested means. First, the Commission of 24 has decided to support the continued use of Amendment IX and the Plan of Action, both of which are based on the principle of voluntarism to achieve abolition of the Central Jurisdiction by 1968. This course of action appears to be doomed to failure on two bases: (1) The Central Jurisdiction continues to reject transfer of the eight conferences within the bounds of the Southeastern Jurisdiction and the four remaining annual conferences within the bounds of the South Central Conference without an agreed upon merger date,[174] and (2) The Southeastern Jurisdiction continues to argue for the two-step procedure embodied in the Plan of Action, which embodies voluntary merger, and it has now received support for this stand in a decision by the Judicial Council that powers reserved to the Jurisdictions under the Plan of Action are constitutional.[175] It is quite apparent that the success of the course of action supported by the Commission of 24 is dependent on a major shift in the basic position of either the Central Jurisdiction or the Southeastern Jurisdiction. Thus far, there is no evidence that either Jurisdiction will change its position.

Second, achievement of racial inclusiveness in the many specific areas designated in the "Resolution for the Elimination of Racial Structure and The Development of Greater Understanding and Brotherhood in The Methodist Church" depends upon voluntary approval of all such changes at the affected levels. Our analysis in this chapter revealed problems encountered at the local level by the National Division of the Board of Missions and the strength of local mores in determing the pattern followed by agencies of the Board of Hospitals and Homes. In addition, two of the four representatives of the Southeastern Jurisdiction on the Commission of 24 submitted a minority report to the Commission's report objecting to efforts to set a termination date for present practices in Church agencies.[176] They introduced an argument that the Commission report was biased in that the vote of each Central Jurisdiction, or former Central Jurisdiction, member on the Commission has a ratio of 13 to 1 in relation to Southeastern Jurisdiction representatives on the basis of 1964 membership figures of the two Jurisdictions.[177] Again, the proposal of the Commission of 24 fails to consider the strength of resistance to change at the local level. Voluntary change has not proved successful, and the minority report must be taken as a sign of continued resistance to basic changes in patterns. Furthermore, the General Conference has refused efforts to pass legislation that would use financial power to require change, even if such legislation were constitutional.

---

[174] *Ibid.*, p. 770.

[175] *Ibid.*, p. 777.

On the basis of present positions advocated by the Southeastern and Central Jurisdictions, the problems that have been encountered at the local level in regard to basic changes in pattern, and the historical importance of regional autonomy in matters related to race, it must be concluded that the recommendations of the Commission of 24 for achieving abolition of the Central Jurisdiction and racial inclusiveness in Church programs are inadequate.

---

[176] Ibid., p. 778.

[177] Ibid., p. 776.

If the analysis put forth here is correct, the Commission of 24 will be required to draft a plan for termination of the Central Jurisdiction to be submitted to the General Conference of 1968. No indication has been given of the form that any such plan might take. A statement in the Commission report alludes to the pressures existing in the Church for strong action and the possibility that some other procedure than Amendment IX and the Plan of Action might be put forth. In discussing the problem of continued support of voluntary action, the report says,

> The first question we have to decide was the same one that has been before us so many times, whether to recommend legislation or other action to encourage and facilitate voluntary transfers and mergers, or whether to propose legislation, including Constitutional Amendments, for mandatory change. We know there is growing concern and impatience throughout the church, and in large measure we share that feeling. We believe all will agree that persuasion resulting in voluntary action is preferable to compulsion, yet compulsion can sometimes be preferable to voluntary inaction.[178]

The minority report objects to the reference to compulsion on the basis that this denies the continued expression of the will of the Church that "All actions in this area should be mutually agreeable to the Conferences concerned and on a voluntary basis."[179] If the pattern of action discerned throughout the history of The Methodist Church is any guide, it would appear that compulsion will not be the basis of any new procedure adopted.

---

[178] Ibid., p. 768.

[179] Ibid., p. 778.

The inquiry to the Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations included queries concerning the work that had been done on efforts to bring people together to implement Amendment IX where reluctance to change exists and efforts designed to promote interracial church extension efforts. The Commission has helped finance a series of meetings held by the Advisory Councils of the Central and Southeastern Jurisdictions.[180] No work on church extension was reported in the General Conference and nothing in this area was mentioned by James.[181] As we noted previously, a staff member of the Section of Church Extension reported that no effort in this area had been taken by the Commission since 1964.[182]

(7) Racial Witness Relief Fund

In 1964, The General Conference voted to establish a Racial Witness Relief Fund to provide financial assistance to ministers and laymen who might suffer economic deprivation or distress because of their effort to witness to the racial inclusiveness in the Church of in the society. The fund was designed to give financial assistance to persons who might lose all or part of their income through "witness to a racially inclusive church," or who might suffer economic distress resulting from arrest or imprisonment "because of their attempt to witness to the oneness of the Human family."[183] The proposal, which was contained in a minority report to

---

[180] Ibid., p. 767.

[181] James Letter, op. cit.

[182] Supra, 473-474.

[183] Daily Christian Advocate, 1964, p. 656.

Received without page(s) 509 .

Filmed as received.

University Microfilms, Inc.

the Committee on the Ministry, originally spoke only of funds to ministers. It was amended to include laymen, and it passed by a vote of 441 to 312.[184]

The procedure contained in the minority report and adopted by the General Conference provided for voluntary contribution by individual, churches, or organizations, and the administration of the Fund was delegated to the Interboard Commission on the Local Church. The Administrative Committee of the Fund, established by, and responsible to, the Interboard Commission on the Local Church, established certain criteria for disbursing the funds, including a question as to whether the need for funds could be met locally, a stipulation that "no funds would be granted to anyone without consultation with the bishop of the area in which the person resides for whom help or assistance is requested," and a provision that the person to be assisted "must be in good standing in his local church."[185]

In two and one-half years following the General Conference, $36,754 had been donated to the fund, and a total of $15,326 had been dispersed in grants to sixteen ministers and two laymen.[186] The information on the size of the fund and the amount dispersed must be augmented by the fact that some annual conferences have provided assistance to their own ministerial and lay members. In addition, the Administrative Committee decided initially not to give bail money, but to concentrate on supplemental salary support. The great disparity between funds collected and funds dispersed provides an interesting picture of a case in which the Church has committed itself and demand has not met expectations. Very few requests for aid have been turned down. Since the extent of local and annual conference aid to ministers and laymen who have experienced financial difficulty is not known, we can only report the bare figures cited above to add to the total picture of ways and dimensions of Methodist response to the racial crisis.

---

[184] Ibid., p. 657.

[185] Interview with Gerald L. Clapsaddle, General Secretary of the Interboard Commission on the Local Church, November 17, 1965.

[186] Telephone Conversation with Gerald Clapsaddle, December 12, 1966.

In November, 1966, the Administrative Committee of the Fund took another vote that demonstrates a willingness to give assistance. They voted to give up to $500 each to sixteen or seventeen persons who had been arrested while trying to integrate worship services at Methodist Churches in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1964. Since that vote was taken, assurances have been given that the charges would be dropped and the funds will not be needed.[187] However, the vote in itself demonstrates a willingness to take an action that might be unpopular among Mississippi Methodists.

(8) Judicial Council

The Judicial Council does not fall under the general heading of boards and agencies being covered in this chapter. Each of the boards and agencies is an administrative body created by, and subject to the authority of, the General Conference. The Judicial Council, however, has a place in The Methodist Church akin to the place of the Supreme Court of the United States in relation to the legislative and executive bodies of the nation. In this situation, although its members are elected by the General Conference, the Judicial Council is not subject to the authority of any body in the Church. Even though it does not fit technically into the scope of this chapter, brief mention is made of its work so that it clearly is understood that there is a national arbiter of disputes within the Church.

---

[187] Ibid.

The Judicial Council, by nature of its task, does not take specific action designed to implement inclusiveness. However, it has been called upon to make decisions on questions of Church law that are important for our understanding of what may develop in the continuing controversy over the procedure for elimination of the Central Jurisdiction. Certain other problems related to race, as well, have come before the Judicial Council.

The most important decisions of the Judicial Council in terms of their effect on the Church are three decisions rendered recently on questions related to the implementation of Amendment IX. These decisions, numbers 232, 233, and 234, have resolved some immediate disputes over the procedure to be followed under Amendment IX and the Plan of Action, and they have indicated possible directions for future action. In Decision No. 232, the Judicial Council ruled that the creation of a racially inclusive Church was a connectional matter, and, as such, it falls legitimately within the scope of General Conference legislation.[188] In Decision No. 233, the

---

[188] Concern, January 1-15, 1966.

Judicial Council ruled that merger of conferences was accomplished as part of an approved transfer, there need not be prior approval of the merger.[189] In Decision No. 234, the Judicial Council sustained the constitutionality of a procedure adopted by the Southeastern Jurisdiction based upon the two-step agreement embodied in the Plan of Action. The adopted procedure approved the transfer of Central Jurisdiction annual conferences into the Southeastern Jurisdiction with the stipulation that merger "will be a Jurisdictional matter to be worked out when such merger is mutually agreeable to the Conferences concerned, the boundaries of the transferring Conferences to remain intact until they may be changed by voluntary action of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference as provided in the Constitution of The Methodist Church."[190]

These three cases represent the continuing debate that has been going on within the Church since 1964 about how and when merger is going to occur. All three decisions involve the two-step procedure of the Plan of Action and the retention of the approval of merger by the parties involved. There is some question whether the annual conferences involved or whether the Jurisdictional Conference would make final approval. Decision 233 supports merger without special Jurisdictional Conference approval when it is a part of a transfer contract. Decision 234 appears to support the Southeastern Jurisdiction's contention that final approval of merger, when it is to follow a transfer, is subject to jurisdictional conference approval because annual conference boundaries are a jurisdictional concern.

---

[189] Daily Christian Advocate, 1966, p. 767.

[190] Ibid., p. 777.

Proponents on both sides of the debate can take heart from these decisions. The ultimate question of how far the General Conference goes in prescribing method and time for mergers remains unresolved because all future action is subject to the test of constitutionality. The most important thing that emerges from the Judicial Council decisions is the demonstration of a strong unifying agent in the Church. The annual conferences, the bishops, and the boards and agencies of the Church all represent The Methodist Church in their particular areas of responsibility, but we have seen that there is often little contact or coordination between or among disparate bodies or officials. The General Conference is the major manifestation of unity in the Church, but it only meets for a short time every four years. The Judicial Council is continuously available for resolution of conflicts which arise over Church law. However, the fact that the Judicial Council is available and is petitioned on the continually perplexing issues of race and regional autonomy testifies to the strength of ties to the national body. The Central Jurisdiction and the Southeastern Jurisdiction continue to maintain positions that can only be resolved by a basic change on the part of one or the other jurisdiction. As long as negotiation and submission of conflicts to the Judicial Council continue, there is evidence of the strength of unity to set over against the effects of regional autonomy.

Several Judicial Council decisions other than those discussed have dealt with issues related to race. Decision No. 55 affirmed the constitutionality of General Conference action designed to change Central Jurisdictional and Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference boundaries to allow the New York and New York East Annual Conferences to have authority to promote new Negro work.[191] Decision No. 85 was made in response to proposed legislation by the General Conference of 1952 which would provide a procedure for transfer of a church from the Central Jurisdiction under a procedure similar to that embodied in Amendment IX passed in 1958. The Judicial Council said in 1952 that such a blanket change could not be made by the General Conference, but an individual act would be required for each instance. The language used in that decision is very important in terms of the present conflict and in relation to the argument that we have made about the integral relation of regional autonomy and race. In the decision, the Judicial Council responded to an argument that the procedure was too complicated and out of keeping with current thought in the Church by saying,

> It is argued by some that such a complicated procedure for such changes is not in keeping with the trend of the thinking of our Church, and therefore should not be held to be necessary. Regardless of such changes in sentiment and thought it must be held in mind that this Constitution was prepared with a view of getting it adopted by all three of the Uniting Churches, and such procedural restrictions were inserted as seemed necessary to bring about the desired result -- unification. Along with these

---

[191] Decisions of the Judicial Council of The Methodist Church, Numbers 1-175, 1940-1960, (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, n. d.), p. 113.

> restrictions, however, were inserted provisions for the amendment of the Constitution. It is not the province of the Judicial Council to effect by judicial interpretation changes in the procedure set out in the Constitution. Apparently a more liberal procedure should be provided. It is the decision of the Judicial Council that the Constitutional provisions for the transfer of work from the Central Jurisdiction to another Jurisdiction can be changed only by Constitutional amendment as provided under the Constitution.[192]

In that passage we see official judicial recognition of the integral relation of regional autonomy and race. We also see the important role that constitutional provisions play in present deliberations.

In 1960, the Judicial Council was asked to rule on the constitutionality of a provision of Amendment IX which permitted the transfer of an annual conference from one jurisdiction to another without regard to jurisdictional boundaries. In Decision No. 169, the Judicial Council affirmed the constitutionality of such a procedure.[193] The effect of the decision was to affirm the legality of invitations such as that of the Northeastern Jurisdiction to annual conferences of the Central Jurisdiction that lay in part or wholly within the geographical boundaries of the Southeastern Jurisdiction. Although the conferences involved were willing, the Central Jurisdiction refused to approve the plan. The Central Jurisdiction took a firm stand at that time that transfers must not be across regional jurisdictional boundaries. It later took action to realign its annual conference boundaries so that they would all conform to the boundaries of the regional jurisdictions.[194] In a related case, the Judicial Council affirmed the constitutionality of Paragraph 680 of the Discipline, which embodies legislation of the General Conference of 1964 intended to facilitate the operation of Amendment IX.[195]

---

[192] Ibid., p. 189.

[193] Ibid., p. 409.

[194] Supra, Chapter 4.

In 1963 and 1964, college students, laymen, ministers, theological school professors, and bishops, in small integrated groups of various kinds, attempted to attend worship services at four Methodist church in Jackson, Mississippi. They were continually turned away, and in some cases they were arrested and released on bail after a day or so for trial later on. In 1964, the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs of the Board of Christian Social Concerns, submitted a request to the Judicial Council for a declaratory decision on three questions,

> Question No. 1. Has any authority other than the preacher in charge of a local church, the District Superintendent or the Bishop the right to forbid any person who is properly dressed or properly behaved from attending a service of worship in a Methodist Church?
>
> Question No. 2. Have the Trustees or the Official Board of any local Methodist Church the right to close the church property to any person or persons who say that they wish to attend such a church for public worship or Christian instruction in regularly scheduled classes?
>
> Question No. 3. Have the Trustees and/or the Official Board of a local Methodist Church the right to refuse the use of the church building for purposes other than that of worship and/or Christian instruction; or for meetings not in accordance with the purposes for which said church buildings have been set apart?[196]

The Judicial Council dismissed the request for a decision on these questions because it was not alleged that any particular legislation had been violated nor had any specific allegations of fact been made. Consequently, Grover Bagby of the Division of Human Relations and Leon Adkins of the Division of the Local Church of the Board of Education prepared a long brief on the issue, entitled "All Persons...Are Proper Candidates...," and submitted it to the Judicial Council on behalf of Secretarial Council of The Interboard Commission on The Local Church.[197]

---

[195] Daily Christian Advocate, 1964, p. 373.

[196] Ibid., p. 469.

The petition and brief detailed the applicable Church law and specified the facts of the case, including the names of all the persons arrested. The Judicial Council ruled that it did not have jurisdiction because the Secretarial Council of the Interboard Commission does not qualify as a petitioner. In addition, it ruled that the issue raised by the petition, that certain aspects of Methodist law were ambiguous, had become moot because of the addition of Paragraphs 106.1 and 106.3 to the Discipline by the General Conference of 1964.[198] The first paragraph declares that all persons are eligible to attend services, participate in programs, and, when appropriate vows are taken, enter into membership in any local church in the connection. The second declares, "A member of a local Methodist church is a member of The Methodist Church anywhere in the connection."[199]

This decision is important for several reasons. First, it affirms the constitutionality of the legislation declaring that all churches are open regardless of race, color, national origin, or economic condition. Second, its affirmation of the universality of membership anywhere in the connection is another evidence of the unity of the national denomination. Third, its declaration that the issue is moot raises interesting questions about the willingness too of the Church, through its elected highest judiciary, to take action supporting the efforts of members and clergy to integrate local churches. The decision, denied authority to petition to the Secretarial Council of the Interboard Commission of the Local Church, but it did say that the Commission itself did have such authority. However, by declaring the issue moot, by unamimous decision, the Judicial Council precluded re-submittal. Although the issue may have been settled as to Church law, the trials of persons arrested was still pending. As we have seen, the administrators of the Racial Witness Relief Fund voted in November, 1966, six months after the Judicial Council decision, to provide financial assistance to those arrested.[200] A decision supporting the legality of the action of those arrested might have affected the secular court trials, which were not dropped until a half year after the Judicial Council decision.

---

[197] *op. cit.*

[198] Judicial Council Decision, April 28, 1965.

[199] *Discipline*, 1964, *op. cit.*, Para. 106.3

The above decisions demonstrate the various ways in which the action of the Judicial Council has affected different issues within the Church related to the question of racial inclusiveness. Once again, the Judicial Council only has responsibility to rule on questions of law and fact, and it does not have a particular program designed to implement inclusiveness.

---

[200] *Supra*, p. 511.

The major contribution to this study of this brief review of Judicial Council decisions is that it demonstrates a vital cohesiveness in the national body which has been lacking in some other portions of this study.

Evaluation of the Response of the Boards and Agencies

In the chapters dealing with the annual conferences and the bishops, an attempt was made at the end of each chapter to draw together the major findings in order to frame a cohesive statement about the pattern of response exhibited by the annual conferences and by the bishops. Our assessment of the boards and agencies of the Church will take a somewhat different form because of the nature of the content of the chapter. Although the boards and agencies should be considered together as the responsible executive agencies of The Methodist Church at the national level, their disparate concerns and specialized tasks required more interpretive comment throughout the chapter than had been the case in either of the two preceding chapters. Thus, much of the evaluation of the boards and agencies has already been made. Furthermore, in the second part of the chapter, the treatment of individual boards and agencies was limited to a review of major policy statements and hiring practices. The survey of policies and major efforts of the selected boards in the second half of the chapter was designed to provide an impressionistic view of the response at the national level to fill out Part II of our study. In view of the above factors, we shall restrict our evaluation to a listing of major conclusions that emerged from an analysis of the boards and agencies.

(1) The first half of this chapter was devoted to an analysis of three divisions of major boards of the Church, the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, The Section of Christian Social Action of the Woman's Division of the Board of Missions, and The National Division of the Board of Missions. The most notable fact about the response of the first two of these divisions was the heavy emphasis upon conferences, study programs, and educational materials. As we noted at several points throughout the chapter, such efforts are useful, but when unrelated to specific follow-up measures, their impact tends to dissipate. This fact has been recognized to some extent by the divisions involved, and they are now directing more effort to programs that will have more certain and direct impact, such as training community action organizers. Thus, the duration and the character of much of the response was of a questionable nature in terms of its effectiveness.

The exception to the above pattern, the National Division of the Board of Missions, was directly involved through a number of its projects in inter-racial work or efforts designed to bring about confrontation between the races. We noted in our examination of the National Division that many of its efforts are of very recent origin, reflecting in part the response to events in the society.

(2) There were several important indications of an unwillingness to utilize Church funds or economic power to implement the stated goal of inclusiveness. One prominent example of the unwillingness to use funds was the refusal to respond to the requests of the Division of Human Relations

and Economic Affairs for funds to expand its efforts at the height of the civil rights movement after 1963. This refusal was coupled with the rejection of assistance to the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches. Still another example of the failure to use Church funds in an area of the Church where great expenditures are made was seen in our analysis of the Section of Church Extension of the National Division of the Board of Missions. It will be recalled that millions of dollars are loaned each year, but a loan policy related to race was only in the discussion stage in 1966. One further illustration of both the potential and the problem with funds was contained in the questions raised at several conferences about the use of Church investment funds. The importance of these questions was that they were raised by staff members of Church boards who know Church practices from the inside.

(3) The effect of history was again demonstrated in this chapter. One of the major interests of our study has been the attempt to ascertain the effect of the Separation of 1844 and the Union of 1939 on contemporary events. We have seen strong indications of this influence in our analysis of the dispute over the Central Jurisdiction, the response of the annual conferences, and the response of the bishops. In the present chapter, the effect of history was most clearly demonstrated at those times when efforts directed at the South were involved. We have cited several such cases in our discussion of Church funds. In these cases, boards with national representation voted down efforts to use Church funds in the midst

of civil rights efforts in the South. The Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, the responsible agency of the Church on racial matters, was effectively neutralized. The Board of Education reported pressures from opposing forces in the Church when it began to use pictures of integrated groups.

In history and sociology, there is always a problem in distinguishing between correlation and causation. The precise degree of causation of the peculiar history of Methodists in regard to Negroes in the Church on present affairs would be difficult, if not impossible, to document. The problem in this case is intensified by the added factor of strong cultural differences in different sections of the Church. The relative effect of historical and cultural factors would be especially difficult to assess. However, we have noted before that there has been concern in the Church about any steps that would endanger the Union, and efforts at General Conference directed at using the economic potential of the Church have been consistently defeated. Furthermore, denominational bodies lacking strong southern constituencies, such as the United Church of Christ and the United Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., have developed strong programs of their own on race and have supported the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches. Also, northern annual conferences of The Methodist Church have responded in ways noticeably different from that of the Church as a national body. Thus, there is sufficient basis to say that the response of the national boards and agencies has been strongly affected by the combination of historical and cultural factors. The historical factor joins in importance when this chapter is related to the rest of this study.

(4) One of the most interesting and important things that emerged from the board and agency study was the variety of types of criticism leveled at Church policies and board and agency practices by Church personnel at various conferences. The Second Human Relations Conference, the Frogmore Conference, and the Interagency Consultation on Local Church Racial Inclusiveness all produced statements pinpointing areas where Church practice fell short of policy. More important, they all suggested constructive steps that could be taken. The significance of these critiques and suggestions lies in the fact that they come from Church personnel with knowledge of what is taking place inside the Church

This analysis of the boards and agencies of the Church covers so many agencies that it can only be suggestive and impressionistic. Yet, when put together with the other portions of our entire study, this chapter helps to round out our understanding of the total response of The Methodist Church to the racial crisis. It is especially helpful in shaping our interpretation of the response of the Church as a national body over against the segmental expression of the annual conferences and the bishops. Furthermore, we gain a better appreciation of the type of response of the Church as well as the focus of much of the Church's effort directed toward race.

PART III.

Conclusion

CHAPTER VIII.

CONCLUSION

This study on The Methodist Church and Race is set within the framework of the general question of the Church and social action. Our intention in undertaking this particular study was to focus on the response of one denomination to a particular social problem in order to analyze both the response and the factors that have shaped the response. The assumption behind this approach is that this kind of analysis will illumine the Church and social action question. The response of The Methodist Church to the present racial crisis was selected as an appropriate problem for study for several reasons. The racial crisis in the post-World War II period has had an impact on the entire nation, and all of the predominantly white denominational bodies have responded to it. Of all the Protestant denominations, the Methodists present the most interesting study in their confrontation with the race problem. On the one hand, the combination of the largest Negro membership of any of the predominantly white denominations, an episcopal structure, and a membership numbering over ten million spread throughout the country offers tremendous potential for affecting the way the racial crisis is met in the nation. On the other hand, the peculiar history of Methodism in regard to race has created an internal problem that mitigates against full utilization of the potential of the Church. The tension by these opposing factors is the basis for choosing The Methodist Church over other Protestant denominations. Other denominations responding to the racial crisis without the internal problems of history and culture faced by the Methodists respond without an element of risk facing the Methodists. A response made with relatively little danger of cost may be effective, but it is not an adequate test of the commitment of the responding body.

In carrying out our intention, the study has been divided into two parts. In Part I, we focused on the history of the conflict within the Church over Negroes. The dispute was manifested first over the issue of slavery, and the issue of the conflict was the Separation. The problem emerged again in the deliberations leading to the Union of 1939, and it was resolved at that time by the establishment of the jurisdictional system and the Central Jurisdiction. The conflict emerged again shortly after the consummation of the Union, and the question of the place of Negroes in the life of the Church has absorbed much of the energy of the Church in the last two decades. In Part II, we turned our attention to the response of the Church to the racial crisis as manifested through selected aspects of the organizational life of the Church. It was recognized at the outset that the Church works through individual members, local congregations, and ministers as well as through the various levels of ecclesiastical organization and boards and agencies. Our study, however, was limited to the annual conferences, which are the basic bodies of the Church, the bishops, and the national boards and agencies. Our study was further limited by selection of representative annual conferences and particular boards and agencies, as well as by available materials. In Part II we sought on the one hand to describe and analyze the response of the ecclesiastical structure, and on the other hand to discover how the response through the structure was related to, and determined by, the historical inheritance.

In this concluding chapter, we have set ourselves the task of bringing Part I and Part II together by attempting to draw out implications in three areas: First, the importance of historical events for the present response; Second, assertions that can be made about The Methodist Church as a denominational body confronting a social problem; and Third, what can be said about the question of the Church and social action on the basis of this study. We shall address ourselves to each of these concerns, attempting in each case to draw upon evidence and interpretation from earlier sections to inform our discussion here.

The Importance of History for the Present Response

The persistent factor in this entire study has been a conflict among white members of the Church over the Negro-white relations in Church and society. The period leading to the Separation of 1844 was marked by growing tension over slavery, tension growing out of pressures generated by an either-or choice of compromise of principle or schism. We noted in our analysis of the Separation that the position finally developed was a thoroughgoing compromise of the strong antislavery position in order to make Methodism acceptable to the South and to hold the Church together. One very important element of the understanding of that compromise is that it was not arrived at deliberately and consciously. Rather, without repudiating the statement of principle, the Church gradually moved over a forty year period to the compromise without developing a rationale for its position. There were at least three things that emerged from the conflict situation of the first period that have carried over to succeeding periods with great force: (1) the ecclesiastical and political structure of the Church and race have been integrally related, (2) choices between continued disunity and integration and between schism and integration have always been resolved at the expense of the professed position on race in the light of the principle of the brotherhood of man, and (3) the compromise in every period has been a compromise on the part of the majority of northern Methodists.

The major difference between the period leading to the Separation and the period leading to the Union is that the first period was marked by attempts to hold the Church together while the latter period was marked by efforts to redefine the Church. Between 1844 and 1939, opposing positions were more clearly demarcated and modern Methodism was taking shape. The most important element that characterized this period was the emergence of a recognition of the integral relationship of regional autonomy and historic patterns of relations between the races. It is clear from the documents on negotiations leading to the Union that acceptance of this integral relation was the sine qua non for unification. The Plan of

Union embodied specified regional autonomy and separated the races at the local and annual conference levels of the Church. The Constitution adopted at that time protects that portion of the Church that fought for the present form of the Church against arbitrary change.

The history of conflict over the issue of race from 1784 to 1939 has affected the present response of the Church in its attempts to deal with its internal problem and in its attempts to work within society. The direct effects on the internal problem seen in the dispute over the Central Jurisdiction are demonstrable. One direct effect is the continued relation of regional autonomy and the place of Negroes in the Church. The integral relationship of the two was seen clearly in 1956 when the Church responded to demands for change by the appointment of the Commission of 70. The mandate of the Commission was to study the entire jurisdictional system. The Commission, however, understood its mandate to include taking special cognizance of the segregation represented by the Central Jurisdiction. Amendment IX, adopted by the annual conferences in 1956 and strongly supported by the Commission of 70 in 1960, is based on the two-step procedure which leaves final decision on merger at the annual conference and local church levels in the hands of the jurisdictional or annual conferences directly affected. White members in the South have been willing to take step one, which would remove the symbol of segregation, the Central Jurisdiction; but they have continually refused to adopt any terminal date for actual mergers at the annual conference level.[1]

---

[1] Recent Judicial Council decisions make it possible that changes may occur in the way orders proceed, since it has been called a connectional

The alternatives of either compromise of a strong principle or disunity that were present in the earlier periods have affected the approach to the Central Jurisdiction problem in other ways as well. Perhaps the most important of all has been the adoption of the principle of voluntarism as basic to any approach to change. On the one hand, voluntarism is a necessary response dictated by constitutional limitations designed to preserve regional autonomy and historic patterns of race relations. The most important limitations are embodied in the procedures for constitutional amendments and changes in the basic structure of the Church. Basic changes cannot be made by a simple majority of General Conference delegates, and thus it is impossible for the northern majority to impose its will on the southern minority. Since nearly fifty per cent of the members and over fifty per cent of the churches of the Central Jurisdiction are found in the Southeastern Jurisdiction alone, regional autonomy puts crucial determinative power on timing of mergers in the hands of southern white Methodists. Voluntarism thus subjects stated theological principles on race, as expressed in Paragraph 1824 of the Discipline, to the veto power of regions with large membership in opposition. Moral action, then, is dependent upon the vote of those to be most directly affected.

---

matter. However, the constitutional framework may still lack support of the Southern position. It should also be noted that some annual conferences of the Southeastern Jurisdiction are willing to move toward merger, thus the statement about southern judgments needs to be modified. However, the Southeastern Jurisdiction, representing the majority view, is still unwilling to move toward merger or set a terminal date.

Furthermore, initiative for changing patterns within the Church lies at the local level of the Church rather than in the total Church as represented in the General Conference.

It is important to note that voluntarism as defined by the Methodists has strong historical roots in the nineteenth century Protestant scene in America. The idea that individuals must be persuaded to take action and that response is freely given and in the hands of the voting laity is an important tradition. Certainly, The Methodist Church has no coercive force over its individual members. However, as we have seen, there has been a consistent refusal to take initiative in terms of procedure even within the range of action open at the national level. The fear of schism has been voiced, and the strong influence of history has made a mark in determining where initiative resides. This was most evident in the statement of the Commission of 70 that compromise was its major operating principle.

One further sign of the historical influence on the dispute over the Central Jurisdiction is seen in the relative position of the contending parties. In the period leading to the Separation and in the period leading to the Union, the southern portion of the Church, though in the minority, has consistently taken the lead in determining the course of events. In the early period, the leadership of the northern majority decried but accepted the erosion of the antislavery position under the pressure of southern demands. When the pressure increased as abolitionism grew, the leadership in the North moved to squelch abolitionism within the Church.

It was only when it was caught between the southerners and the secessionists in the North that the northern majority took a position that opposed the South. In the period leading to the Union, the only minority voice of any size was that of the Negro members of the Church and their supporters. The extent of Negro opposition to the Plan of Union is evident in their rejection of the Plan in votes in 17 out of 19 annual conferences. At that time, however, they did not have any power and their white supporters did not constitute an organized body of any sizeable strength. To some extent the white opponents of a segregated structured were in disarray because of the conflicting conceptions of what change would be possible following the Union. In consequence, the Church, South, held the key to unity or disunity, and its demands for regional autonomy and segregated Negro jurisdiction were fulfilled. In the contemporary period, the southern voice, supported now by the Constitution, has been the most dominant in directing the course of events, as is evident in the adoption of Amendment IX and the two-step procedure. However, in an interesting parallel to the period between 1840 and 1844, the emergence of Negro leadership in the 1960 to 1964 period has been accompanied by a growing northern voice for definite steps to terminate the Central Jurisdiction at some specified terminal date. The Negro voice is not yet strong enough to force a shift in the approach to the problem, and Constitution still supports the southern position. Nevertheless, the locus of power has shifted to some extent. Thus, throughout, the southern voice has been the dominant one. Only when it has been challenged by other minority voices within the Church has its dominance been threatened.

The effect of history on the attempts of the Church to implement its concern for inclusiveness in society was seen at a number of points throughout our study. A very consistent pattern of inability or unwillingness to take effective action emerged in relation to expenditure of funds and the use of restrictive financial pressure. Individual instances of this pattern were discussed in the chapter on the boards and agencies of the Church and reviewed in the evaluation of the response of the boards and agencies. It will be recalled that we there cited the refusal to support requests for funds for the Division of Economic Relations and Economic Affairs and the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches, the lack of a policy on use of church extension funds, and the unwillingness to take restrictive action against institutions of the Church as important examples of opportunities to use economic power that were not utilized. The "business as usual" response to the request for funds for the Commission on Religion and Race at the height of the confrontation on race in the 1960's is one of the most damning pieces of evidence on the Church's willingness to implement its stated goal. The precise role of history in this pattern is difficult to assess. However, decisions on funds are made by boards with representatives from all jurisdictions in the Church, and the action on specific requests for use of economic power closely parallels the action taken by the denomination in its approach to the Central Jurisdiction problem. That is, we see again an unwillingness to use the initiative available within the ecclesiastical structure to implement the Church's goal of inclusiveness.

Some of the above mentioned examples of refusal to use economic power are related to problems within the Church, but in the case of new churches and in the case of church institutions, such as schools and hospitals, whatever action is taken has a direct effect upon community patterns. Lack of action thus results in support of existing community patterns. The importance of this last statement is that the Church's refusal to use economic power not only reduces its effort to implement its goal of inclusiveness, but refusal actually operates in direct opposition to implementation efforts by perpetuating patterns of segregation in the community.

The pattern of response to proposals for the use of the economic power of the Church to change community patterns has been almost consistently one of rejection. One of the potential assets of The Methodist Church in terms of the issue of race is its large membership spread through every geographical region of the Church. Along with the wide geographical spread of membership, there is a wide distribution of hospitals, schools, neighborhood houses, and other welfare centers. However, the widespread membership appears to mitigate against effective use of economic power since church boards, with members representing every jurisdiction, have been unable or unwilling to vote the use of funds that would of necessity mean involvement in social change in an area where large numbers of Methodists live. As we have noted, Bishop Alton charged that Methodist hospitals tend to follow community patterns rather than lead. Yet, efforts to restrict financial support for agencies that fail to offer services on a non-racial basis have been consistently defeated at General Conference.

There are exceptions to the pattern of the use of economic power which we have noted previously. The Division on Human Relations and Economic Affairs and the Woman's Division of Christian Service have consistently given financial support to civil rights activities in addition to the involvement of staff personnel. They both contributed to the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches. However, both of these agencies have many concerns other than race and operate on relatively limited budgets. In consequence, their resources for the racial problem area have been meagre. One other exception to the general pattern is the National Division of the Board of Missions. Many of the agencies of the Section of Home Fields offer their services on a non-segregated basis and it gives support to a number of special interracial projects in cities. Recently, the National Division voted to give $70,000 to the Delta Ministry Program of the National Council of Churches in Mississippi. This was the first time that the Church had given any substantial support for a National Council program on race. Finally, the National Division began the Metropolitan Urban Service Training Program in New York in 1964. That program, aimed at all city problems, necessarily involves problems related to race. The only qualification that we would put on our appraisal of the use of funds by the National Division of the Board of Missions in its response to the racial crisis is that almost all of the above mentioned actions have been of very recent origin. The recent origin does not qualify the importance of the response, but it does contribute to our assessment of the leadership role of the Church.

The degree of willingness to allocate funds to help change patterns of racial segregation and the degree of willingness to restrict funds to agencies that refuse to put into practice the Church's policy on race are not the only bases on which to evaluate the Church's commitment to implement its stated goal of inclusiveness in society. As assessment based on dollars expended would be inadequate. However, funds are necessary to engage personnel, church extension involves millions of dollars annually, and funds given to agencies that segregate perpetuates patterns opposed by the Church. The economic power of the Church is one of its most important resources, and failure to use it minimizes the Church's effectiveness. More important, it may symbolize a basic lack of commitment to work for its stated goal. Any strong action by the Church in the area of race involves the risk of loss of financial support, at least, and renewed schism, ultimately. Again we see the intrusion of history into contemporary affairs.

The Methodist Church and Race: Response and Action

The history of The Methodist Church and race provides the framework for our understanding of the response to the racial crisis, and we have demonstrated the influence of history on the Church's attempt to implement its two-fold goal of inclusiveness in Church and society. We now want to draw together what we have seen in the analysis of the contemporary response in order to accomplish two purposes: First, we wish to isolate what has been discovered about the nature of the response in terms of types and timing of action; and, Second, we want to make some summary comment about The Methodist Church as a national denominational body responding to a particular social problem in order to prepare for our discussion of the question of the Church and social action. Accordingly, we shall organize our comments here around the following themes: types of response and action, the inwardness of much of the response, the extent to which the Church has been a leader, the role of Negro Methodists, the North/South differential, and Methodism as a national denomination.

(1) Types of response and action. Throughout this work we have commented on the timing, form, and effectiveness of responses made by various agencies or officials of the Church. Out of the variety of specific responses made, it is possible to draw some conclusions that provide a useful framework for commentary on the total response of the Church. First, there has been strong reliance throughout the Church on personal contact, study, and conferences. The General Conference responded to increasing pressures for change within the Church by appointing study commissions in 1960 and 1964. Both of these commissions supported study and contact as methods leading to change. The Interracial Leadership Conferences sponsored by the Board of Christian Social Concerns in

the late 1950's, the two Human Relations Conferences sponsored by a number of agencies in the Church, the Quadrennial Program on Race, supported by the General Board of Christian Social Concerns and the Woman's Division of Christian Service, with its 39 regions program, and the thousands of study groups of the local Woman's Societies are all evidence of the strong commitment to study as a basic method leading to change. The persistent rejection by the General Conference of the use of financial support as a lever to bring the practice of Church supported agencies into line with stated principle, coupled with the 1964 authorization of a study of all institutions, which effectively delayed any action for at least four years, is an example of reluctance to take action as well as another indication of the support of study.

Certainly it must be said that one of the major resources of The Methodist Church is its ability, realized and potential, of bringing people throughout the nation into firsthand contact with persons of other races and with basic information on the Church's position, basic information from the social sciences and history, and methods of dealing with controversy over race. An observed weakness of the reliance on study is that it often is not contained in a total program in which it is related to action growing out of the study. Furthermore, study and personal contact, as we have noted previously, have been seriously questioned as methods of change when dealing with prejudice and discrimination when unrelated to measures designed to change the entire situation. Perhaps the most dramatic example of the ineffectiveness of study and conferences when unaccompanied by procedures for training personnel, for continuous contact and feed-back, and for accomplishing specified tasks was the Quadrennial Program on Race, undertaken in 1960. It will be recalled that that program, supported by the General Board of Christian Social Concerns and the Section of Christian Social Concerns of the Woman's Division of Christian Service, involved the expenditure of thousands of dollars. The Section of Christian Social Concerns alone spent an average of nearly $15,000 per year for each year of the quadrennium, which meant the investment of almost its entire budget for race problems. When the program was launched, it was hoped that four to five million Methodists throughout the nation would be working for changes in race relations' patterns by the end of the 1960-64 quadrennium. As we noted previously, when an attempt was made to revivify the program in 1965, not a single response was received from local regional committees. The failure of this program was one of the factors in the shift of emphasis by the Section of Christian Social Concerns to emphasis on more intensive training of smaller groups. The Frogmore Conference of 1966 was a first attempt at the new thrust, and it was designed to train less than fifty persons. Furthermore, continued contact, reassessment, and re-training were included in the new plan.

The recent shift of some agencies to community organization, financial support now being extended to the Delta Ministry, active support for civil rights legislation by the Section of Christian Social Relations and the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, and the participation of some annual conferences in Project Equality are all evidence that there is a shift in thinking within the Church on the types of measures needed to bring about change. There is strong indication that some of this shift is based on a growing realization that the reliance on study, personal contact, and conferences has not been effective when used exclusively.

In addition to the reliance on study, contact, and conferences, there was a great deal of dependence on statements. Statements are an important measure of the direction of thinking among leaders of the Church, whether General Conference delegates, staff personnel of national boards and agencies, annual conference leaders, or bishops. However, when statements are not coupled with specified procedures or with delegation of responsibility to particular bodies or persons, they may have no effect at all on the existing problems. One prime example of this fact was seen in our analysis of the Southern California-Arizona Conference. Two years prior to the riots in the Watts area of Los Angeles in 1965, the Conference took note of a number of pressing problems in the area and suggested that attention be addressed to them. No procedures were specified and no persons were delegated authority to take action or responsibility to develop procedures. In consequence, nothing had been done by the Conference to alleviate problems in the Watts area prior to riots. Since that time, the Conference has joined in efforts by a number of denominational bodies to work with problems in Los Angeles through a Commission on Religion and Race.

The Southern California-Arizona Conference was not the only annual conference studied that exhibited the pattern of statements unrelated to specified programs of action. Indeed, this pattern was revealed in almost every other conference. The prime exception was the Detroit Conference which was the first among the conferences in our study to employ an executive secretary to develop and direct conference response to social problems. As we have seen, when the New York East Conference delegated authority to a committee with specific responsibility in the area of race, its response moved from statements to a number of specified actions. In the Rock River Conference, when a minister of the annual conference was assigned to the area of race, the nature of the conference response changed dramatically. Statements represent the thoughts and the good intentions of the leaders of the annual conferences. However, ministers and laymen alike are involved in their own work and are concerned about a variety of problems. The good intentions contained in statements are dissipated or entirely lost if there is no assignment of responsibility.

Certainly what has been said about annual conferences and statements applies to the General Conference and the bishops as well. The General Conference has adopted a number of statements, which are now in the Discipline, about inclusiveness. It is specified in the Discipline that hiring and personnel policies are to reflect the Church's position on inclusiveness, that all services of agencies of the Church are to be open to all regardless of race, color, or creed, and that race is not a basis for exclusion of any individual from worship or membership. Yet, as we have seen, the General Conference has consistently refused to take action designed to require compliance with its stated position. This refusal has affected the approach to the Central Jurisdiction problem and the impact of the Church on community patterns through its agencies receiving World Service funds. The bishops, too, relied heavily on statements, especially when responding collectively. We reviewed some strong examples of other types of action and initiative on the part of bishops which demonstrated what is possible in that office. As we have noted, many actions by individual bishops are behind the scenes and unreported. However, we can say with authority that the bishops have not played a leadership role collectively through the Council of Bishops. In the Leiffer study, they stated that they had the authority to play a more decisive leadership role in the Church, but they were failing to use it. On race, their collective response has been limited to the episcopal addresses and one or two special statements by the Council of Bishops.

(2) The inwardness of the response. One very important conclusion that emerges from our analysis of the response of the annual conferences, the boards and agencies, and the bishops is that the great majority of discussion and action on race has been directed to problems within the Church, despite the double focus of the Church's stated goal. In part, this situation may be explained by the great investment of time and energy at all levels of the Church on the resolution of the Central Jurisdiction issue. In addition to many practical problems involved in transition, the

renewed confrontation over the historic problems of regional autonomy and race has siphoned off thought and effort that might have been directed to other problems. Event when that factor is taken into consideration, however, the predominent direction of response into the Church is apparent. This inwardness was especially apparent in the responses of the annual conferences and the bishops.

We have noted previously that the Rock River Conference, which includes Chicago within its boundaries, directed its attention entirely within the Church until very recently. It was only after 1963, when the Churches of the nation began to give their entire support to the civil rights movement, that the Rock River Conference began to express concerns about community problems related to race. Its three year, $180,000 program, undertaken in 1966, is one of the most dramatic examples of an effort by any body in the Church to make an impact on community patterns. The lack of any mention of the Montgomery Bus Boycott or the sit-ins by the North Alabama Conference is another prime example of the Church's failure to play a decisive role in conflicts over race in the life of the society outside the Church. As we have stated before, there is no neutral ground in the midst of confrontation over a particular issue. Silence on the part of the North Alabama Conference thus had the effect of supporting the existing racial patterns. In our analysis of that Conference, we saw that they spoke in support of the traditional pattern of relations between the races, and thus their opposition to the civil rights activities might have been expected. However, the important point for us is that the annual conference is the basic body of The Methodist Church, and, as such, is the Church in its particular area. The inwardness of the Rock River Conference indicates at least ineffectiveness or lack of engagement of the Church in that area in terms of inclusiveness. The silence of the North Alabama Conference in the face of important confrontations on race indicates opposition within the Church at its very basic level to the stated principle of the Church on race.

In our evaluation of the response of the bishops in Chapter VI, we stressed that most of the statements and actions of the bishops were directed to problems in the Church. We may again cite Leiffer's conclusion that the bishops tend to be insulated from problems outside the Church. The fact that the chief executives of the Church in the annual conferences have this inward focus undoubtedly is important in shaping the responses of the conferences. Several bishops were exceptions to this pattern, and their involvement in confrontations in the community are dramatic examples of the kind of leadership that bishops might give. The collective response of the bishops was directed entirely to problems within the Church.

The boards and agencies present a mixed picture on the question of the focus of their activities. We have seen that a high proportion of effort and financial expenditure on race has been directed to a variety of conferences. In the 1950's, the Interracial Leadership Conferences sponsored by the General Board of Social and Economic Relations were intended to develop understanding between Negro and white Methodists and to inform the conferees about particular community problems in their respective areas. Although papers were presented on community problems, the importance of the Interracial Leadership Conferences was summed up by Church leaders as the fact that Negroes and whites were together. Thus, the focus tended to be on intra-Church problems in spite of the format and intentions of the Conferences. The two Conferences on Human Relations, the Quadrennial Program on Race, the Inter-agency Consultation on Local Church Racial Inclusiveness, and the Frogmore Conference are other examples of major conferences. With the exception of the conference on the local church, all of the conferences had the double focus contained in the Church's stated goal of inclusiveness in Church and society. Increasingly, however, the movement has been from intra-Church to extra-Church concerns at these conferences. Thus the Second Conference on Human Relations, in 1963, was geared primarily to problems outside the Church, and when it did deal with problems within the Church it was very often in terms of the impact on the wider community. For example, the recommendation that investment funds of the Board of Pensions be invested only in companies with non-discriminatory employment policies was intended to bring financial pressure to bear on private industry. The Frogmore Conference, sponsored by the Section of Christian Social Concerns of the Woman's Division of Christian Service and the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs of the Board of Christian Social Concerns, was designed to assess race problems both in the Church and in society. However, much of the focus on the Church was in terms of the possibilities for community impact that were not being utilized. Thus, one strong suggestion was the utilization of church extension funds for the development of inclusive churches that would contribute to inclusive communities.

The shift of attention from intra-Church to extra-Church problems in the above mentioned conferences has been paralleled in a number of other types of action. Numerous agencies and special programs supported by the National Division of the Board of Missions, for example, have lately become integrated or have adopted policies supporting integration. This will tend to have some impact on local communities where agencies are located. Curiously, the Division's Section of Home Fields is supporting a number of interracial projects in both the North and the South, but it has not yet required agencies that it supports to integrate their facilities. Only when there is overt opposition to integration will any action be taken. In addition to the ongoing programs of the Section of Home Fields, the National Division has funded the MUST program in New York and is now helping to support the Delta Ministry Program of the National Council of Churches in Mississippi. Both of these projects are intended to change existing community patterns.

The Division on Human Relations and Economic Affairs, the Section of Christian Social Relations, and the Section of Home Fields National Division of the Board of Missions, which are the three boards of the Church most responsible for the development and direction of the Church's response to problems related to race, have been attempting in a variety of ways to move the Church toward involvement in community problems. In addition to what has been mentioned thus far, the Section of Christian Social Concerns and the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs have given support to the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches; the Woman's Division of Christian Service is now supporting the Delta Ministry Program; staff personnel of the Section of Christian Social Concerns and the Division of Human Relations have participated in demonstrations in the South; both the Section and the Division have supported national civil rights legislation through periodicals and through direct approach to Congressmen; and the Woman's Division of Christian Service provided bail money for three girls arrested at a Jackson, Mississippi, Methodist Church while trying to worship there on an integrated basis. These actions, among others that have been taken, are indicative of a thrust into the community that was lacking in the responses of most of the bishops and most of the annual conferences in our study. However, the lack of a firm policy on church extension and the continued practice of segregation by some church agencies tends to counterbalance the affirmative efforts of the three boards discussed above. In the case of the National Division of the Board of Missions, we find a paradox of support for the Delta Ministry program and a church extension policy that was criticized at the Frogmore Conference as perpetuating existing patterns of segregation. Furthermore, the Division of Human Relations and the Section of Christian Social Concerns operate on a very limited budget, and thus the effectiveness is muted. The Division of Human Relations is especially circumscribed financially. The Section of Christian Social Concerns has some autonomy and is therefore more flexible in the use of its funds. The fact remains, however, that it is among the staff personnel of these boards that we find the most consistent efforts to implement both thrusts of the stated Methodist goal on inclusiveness.

(3) The extent to which the Church has been a leader. The evidence presented in our study supports the conclusion that on the issue of race the Church has tended to follow rather than lead. The Methodist Church was among a number of denominational bodies that declared soon after World War II that it was against racial segregation. Nevertheless, the Supreme Court and Civil Rights Groups really spearheaded the changing focus on race that developed in the decade from the middle 1950's to the middle 1960's. Church agencies passed resolutions supporting the Supreme Court decision of 1954 and the sit-ins. The importance of the leadership of the Court was most clearly seen in the response of the New York East Conference to it. It will be recalled that in 1955 the Conference spoke of the Court's decision as a judgment on the Church for failing to lead, and then suggested that the court's understanding of the evil of segregation be incorporated into the Social Creed of The Methodist Church. The Civil Rights legislation passed by the Congress in 1957 and 1960 are further signs of government initiative, and in the 1960's the Justice Department and the Civil Rights Commission of the Federal Government have played leadership roles.

In our analysis we saw that it was really only after 1963, when the movement for change had gained sufficient momentum to win the support of a large consensus of the voters in the nation, that the Church began to become involved in the conflict outside the Church. As we have seen, the developments outside the Church also influenced the situation within the Church, especially in terms of the emergence of Negro leadership. Signs of the late development of the Church's response to community problems were manifest in our study. With one major exception, the Detroit Conference, the annual conferences included in our study developed programs of involvement in communities within their boundaries and in trouble spots in other parts of the country after 1963. There has been a demonstrable change of focus in the response of Church boards and agencies since that time as well. However, some agencies of the Church still continue to segregate. The new interest in community organization, the support given to the Delta Ministry, the MUST program, a number of the interracial projects of the Section of Home Fields of the National Board of Missions, and the inclusion of pictures of mixed racial groups in Church literature are all recent developments. The involvement of individual bishops in community affairs, such as demonstrations and open housing programs, has also been a recent development. In fact, those bishops who have been most active in the efforts to change racial patterns have bewailed the failure of the Church to take a leadership role in the conflict over race. One of the strongest measures of the impact of events outside the Church on the response of the Church was seen in the analysis of the response of the bishops where we cited ten basic changes from the late 1950's to the 1960's.

The consistent pattern throughout the structure of the Church has been one of failure to initiate action on race. To some extent we can see the strong influence of culture in the annual conferences in the southern portion of the United States. That influence, however, does not explain the lack of leadership among northern annual conferences and bishops. Their pattern was similar to the bulk of the population in the North, which was characterized by indifference and reluctance, if not resistance, until the major shift in 1963. This tends to confirm our general conclusion about the Church and leadership. There is also an interesting historical parallel. In the conflict over abolitionism, the Church did not take any action against slaveholding within the Church until the antislavery movement had gained popular momentum after 1840, at which time the leadership moved from the antislavery societies to the political arena. Even after the Separation, however, the Church did not change the position it had adopted in 1840, which permitted slaveholding members, and it was only after the nation was at war that the position was changed. In both periods, forces outside the Church took the leadership position on an issue which was of central concern to the Church. The historical parallel is not just an interesting coincidence. As we have seen, the impact of history on the Church, and the fear of renewed schism, have tended to mitigate against any affirmative leadership in the effort to change segregation and discrimination patterns.

(4) The role of Negro Methodists. We have discussed fully the changing role of Negroes in the Church in the chapter dealing with the analysis of the controversy over the Central Jurisdiction. Some further comment was made in Chapter VI in which we discussed the response of the bishops. Accordingly, we need only make some summary statements here. The most important development has been the emergence of Negro leadership. It is clear that opposition among leaders of the Central Jurisdiction on what course of action ought to be followed disappeared by 1962 at the latest. Undoubtedly, differences of opinion, such as were evidenced by Central Jurisdiction bishops at the Interracial Leadership Conferences in the late 1950's, have not been replaced by complete unanimity. Furthermore, earlier signs of disagreement and the recent change indicate that Negroes in the Church have also been affected by events outside. However, there is enough agreement that it has been possible to develop a unified public stand on the transfer and merger issue. The result is that a jurisdiction representing less than five per cent of the total membership has been able to thwart efforts to eliminate the Central Jurisdiction without provision being made for effective integration at the annual conference level. One effect of this position, as demonstrated at the General Conference of 1966, is that there are continuing efforts to establish a definite date for completion of merger.

An important result of the establishment by the Central Jurisdiction of its own study commission and the development of the united approach towards merger has been the demonstration of the differing conceptions of, and commitments to, inclusiveness existing in the Church. The General Conference has consistently approved the voluntary procedures embodied in Amendment IX in its sessions in 1956, 1960, 1964, and 1966. As we have noted before, the Committee of Five of the Central Jurisdiction proposed alternative legislation to the General Conference of 1966, and in support of its proposals argued that Amendment IX "was not consciously designed as a tool to eliminate racial segregation from The Methodist Church." Inclusiveness for the Central Jurisdiction means effective participation in the life of the Church at the annual conference and local church level. As long as the Southeastern Jurisdiction refuses to approve plans for merger within its boundaries or set a deadline for the accomplishment of merger, it is apparent that a significant body of its members either understand inclusiveness in terms of transfer or are not committed to the Church's goal.

The proposals of the Committee of Five have called into question the basic commitment of the Church to its stated position by challenging the Church to take specific steps designed to achieve its goals. Clearly, that commitment, made on the basis of the Church's stated theological understanding of the principle of the oneness of all races, is not sufficiently strong for it to risk taking action that might endanger its national structure. Any legislation affecting the jurisdictional structure would encounter constitutional difficulties and litigation before the Judicial Council, but neither the study commissions nor the General Conference, with northern majorities, have taken action requiring a legal test. Also, restrictive financial action has been rejected, and an effective program on race through the Division of Human Relations and Economic Relations has been negated through lack of financing. The challenge presented by Negro Methodists has not yet brought about a basic change in the Church's approach to racial problems. However, Negro opposition to voluntarism and continued segregation in the local life of the Church has served to intensify demands for a definite terminal date for elimination of the Central Jurisdiction through merger. More important, it has required some rethinking on the meaning of inclusiveness and the degree of commitment of the Church to its stated goal of inclusiveness.

(5) The North/South differential. We have discussed previously the differences between northern and southern sections of the Church in our analysis of the history of the conflict on race within the Church and the implications of that history for the contemporary period. However, we may add a brief comment on the differences in the type of response between the two geographical sections of the Church beyond the expected differences on attitudes toward patterns of race relations. We have already noted some of these differences in our evaluation of the responses of the annual conferences and the bishops. The most important difference that came out of our analysis of the annual conferences was on the conception of appropriate action. In the North and the South, the consistent

responses up until the 1960's were in the form of statements. The content varied according to geographical section, but, with few exceptions, no actions were specified. In the 1960's, however, some of the annual conferences in the North began to develop programs involving investment of funds, assignment of personnel, and use of financial power. In the South, in contrast, even the Western North Carolina Conference, which was the most progressive of the three conferences covered in our study, limited its response to statements urging changes in certain patterns or suggesting actions for individuals. The chief difference observed here, which is important for our discussion of the Church and social action, is that some northern conferences affirmed the use of collective action, whereas the southern conferences conceived of response in terms of individuals acting out their faith. The difference in conception of the appropriate response has great ramifications for the development of strategies and for the use of Church power.

There was an observable difference in the response of northern and southern bishops as well. Southern bishops limited their responses to statements, and they usually went no further than calling for understanding, brotherhood, and support of law and order. Some northern bishops participated in demonstrations, led open housing drives, initiated programs within their conferences, and attempted to appoint ministers across color lines. Some of their statements strongly castigated the North for its patterns of discrimination and segregation. In addition, there were several instances in which The Methodist Church was criticized for its hesitant response to the racial crisis. Some of the differences in the response of northern and southern bishops must be attributed to historic and cultural differences that have caused a basically different understanding on the proper relation between the races. The southern bishops would also be aware of the tensions existing in that part of the country that could erupt into violence. Indeed, as we have seen, economic and physical pressures have thwarted several attempts in the South to develop integrated patterns in local churches. In addition, the southern bishops, in a manner akin to that of the southern annual conferences, may exhibit a basic regional difference in attitude toward the appropriate type of action by the Church on any issue.

We have noted previously that northern and southern differences can be, and often are, exaggerated. One of the important things that emerged from our analysis of the annual conferences was the fact that the disparity among conferences in the North and in the South was as great as the disparity between North and South. It is an error to make a division simply along geographical lines. This discovery is also important for the question of the Church and social action. We may further qualify the North/South differential by noting that when the response of the northern annual conferences heightened after 1963, a large proportion of the increased activity was directed at the South. The importance of this observation is that only when action is directed toward changing local problems is there a demonstrated commitment to the basic principle of inclusiveness. It is quite easy to send dollars and personnel to deal with problems in another part of the country without confronting basic problems in the local area, and thus without taking any risk.

(6) Methodism as a national denomination. The extent to which it is possible to talk about The Methodist Church as a responding, unified, national denominational body is an important question raised by this study. Strong regional autonomy supported by the Constitution and tradition, the individual and even antithetical responses of annual conferences, the lack of collective action on the part of the bishops through the Council of Bishops, the admitted lack of cohesiveness in the approach to inclusiveness on the part of the boards and agencies, and the utter lack of communication on the part of bishops at such times as the visits to Jackson, Mississippi, and Selma, Alabama, are factors which combine to qualify the sense in which we can talk about The Methodist Church as a unified body at all. There is a sense, of course, in which it may be said that when any component part of The Methodist Church is taking action that The Methodist Church is there. The annual conference is, indeed, The Methodist Church within its particular boundaries and there is no other Methodist Church which could be there. In another sense, however, the disparate responses on the part of conferences, boards and agencies, and individual bishops present a picture of multiple Methodisms rather than one united denomination.

The quadrennial meeting of the General Conference is the only occasion on which it can be said that the united Church is speaking and taking action. In the interim between General Conference sessions, the only unified work of the Church is through the boards and agencies and the Council of Bishops. We have seen that beyond one or two statements, the Council of Bishops has taken no collective action on race. In an important study of The Methodist Church and social action, the case was made that the boards and agencies play the determinative role in shaping and executing programs and legislation.

> . . . we must now note that an increasingly powerful role falls to the boards, commissions, and other agencies of the church, to develop the programs, to write the legislation, and hence to determine the profile of values enacted by General Conference. The power of bishops and board secretaries is enhanced by the fact that they are continuously at work in administration, control personnel selection, and have national oversight of programs and promotion. In the most recent quadrennium there is evidence that the proposals of the boards tend to become the basis of the legislation adopted at General Conference.[2]

Such a view of the power of the boards and agencies does not hold up in matters related to race on several counts: First, any actions of the boards and agencies requiring increased expenditures of funds are subject to approval of the Council on World Service and Finance; Second, policy on the use of funds, as in the instance of church extension funds, is subject to the vote of a nationally representative board; Third, proposed legislation by board and agency personnel, even when supported by staff members of all the major boards, has no guarantee of support at General Conference when it concerns a controversial issue, as was seen in the case of the lack of support for proposals from the Second Human Rights Conference; and, Fourth, the board and agency staff personnel have testified to the lack of unified action on the problem of inclusiveness, a factor which demonstrates further the lack of unified denominational action.

---

[2] Muelder, Methodism and Society in the Twentieth Century, op. cit., p. 271.

The question of the sense in which The Methodist Church is a unified body is of central importance for this study. The protections for regional autonomy built into the Constitution and the strong support in the Southeastern and South Central Jurisdictions for preservation of the jurisdictional system are part of the historical inheritance from pre-Union days. The General Conference has legislative power, but only within the framework of the Constitution. The Judicial Council's decision that conference mergers are a connectional matter and therefore subject to General Conference legislation raises questions about the inviolability of regional autonomy, but the matter must be tested on Constitutional grounds after legislation is passed.

Long before Union, the separated Episcopal Methodisms combined their efforts on missions because duplication of effort was uneconomical and competition was destructive. This was a first major step toward Union. Certainly there are many evidences of unified practice at annual conference and local church level and unified support for board and agency programs that support the conception of The Methodist Church as an organic, national body. However, the controversy over the way in which the Church should respond to racial problems and the indications of the different ways in which particular segments of the Church do respond to racial problems demonstrate the force of historical,sectional and ideological loyalties and require an appreciation of the segmentation of Methodism in juxtaposition with the evidences of organic structure.

This sense of segmentation can be overstated, of course, and there are strong competing signs that Methodism is a unifying ideology that holds The Methodist Church together. The unity can be demonstrated in several ways. First, there is a shared history with the tradition of the frontier and the circuit riders that binds Methodism together. Second, the Judicial Council plays a decisive role in the Church in that disputing parties submit their differences to it and accept its adjudication. This has tremendous significance for the present conflict over the central jurisdiction, and it may be an important factor in the resolution between the positions of the Southeastern and Central Jurisdictions. Third, a member of The Methodist Church feels that he is a Methodist anywhere and that he has a right to attend any local church no matter where he is. The disputes over open worship in Jackson, Mississippi, and other places, do not disprove this point, in fact they reinforce it. The dispute was raised precisely because it is felt that all Methodists do belong in any local church. Fourth, the *Discipline* is considered the book of law for the entire Church, and it defines patterns that are in fact operative in churches, annual conferences, and boards and agencies throughout the nation.

Thus, there are conflicting pictures of segmentation and unity. The resolution of the conflict may lie in the fact that the Church does have a basic shared history which includes both a single origin and ninty-five years of separation. The Methodist Church, as we know it today, is built upon two historical patterns that result in tension when certain types of conflict arise. Conflict over race exposes the basic tension that exists in the entire Church because of its history.

The Church and Social Action

The study of the response of The Methodist Church to the present racial crisis was intended to illumine the discussion on the question of the Church and social action. That question is only a particular question within the larger framework of the relation of the Church and society, or the Church and the world. Historically, the Church has always resisted complete identification with what it has called the world. There have been differing, and competing, conceptions of the proper relationship throughout the history of the Church. At present, the question of the proper relationship of Church and world is being raised most sharply by debate on the issue of the Church and social action. It was the expectation at the outset of this study that the debate, which often takes place in generalized terms, might be assisted by insights that emerged from the analysis of the response of one denominational body to a particular social problem. As we stated in the introduction, it was not our intention to resolve the debate, rather, we intended to lift up the findings of this study that might inform the general debate. In the evaluation at the end of each chapter in Part II, and in the previous portions of this concluding chapter, we have already pointed to some of the things that must be included in this final section. Our analysis has now been completed, and we shall here attempt to isolate some of the essential factors in the understanding of the Church and social action.

The necessity for such studies as this one arises out of oversimplified appraisals of how the Church does in fact respond to social issues. For example, in the most recent full-scale history of The Methodist Church, in a section on concern for social issues, the statement is made that, "Methodists have never been afraid of taking stands on controversial issues when they believed that Christian moral principles were involved. John Wesley's opposition to the slave trade and to smuggling was an early instance of this."[3] As examples of strong Methodist action, problem areas such as temperance, peace and world order, economic issues, race relations, and church and state are discussed. This section, and in a sense our entire study, is a response to such appraisals.

One very clear fact that emerges from our study is that it is necessary to isolate particular problems and particular denominational bodies when discussing the question of Church and social action. There is no question that The Methodist Church has historically been concerned about social problems, and there are denominational bodies that have responded to the present racial crisis with strong affirmative actions. However, close analysis of the Methodist response to the present racial crisis reveals that in the main the response has been muted, conflicting, delayed, directed into the Church, and at points supportive of existing patterns of segregation and discrimination. In recent years the pattern has begun to change within some annual conferences, within some boards and agencies, and on the part of some bishops. However, no general statement is adequate, and it is necessary to break the response down into its component parts.

---

[3] The History of American Methodism, op. cit., III. p. 547.

Our whole study has been based on the premise that the present response could not be understood without a thorough understanding of the history of denominational confrontation on a particular issue. The importance of the integral relation of regional autonomy and racial segregation is essential for an understanding of the Church that came into being at the Union. With that understanding, we can appreciate the importance of the jurisdictional structure to the South, the reasons why the Church has moved so cautiously in its approach to resolving the internal race problem, and the determinative role that the Constitution plays in limiting the range of possible action. It is essential to understand how powerful the force of history may be in determining the actual response. Within that understanding, we may then assert that an adequate investigation of the Church and social action question must take full cognizance the peculiar history of a denominational body in its response to any single issue.

The types of action included in any response must also receive close appraisal. We have discussed this fully before, and we need only reiterate several salient points here. (1) Statements unaccompanied by specified programs or commitments of funds or personnel do not provide an adequate basis for appraisal of a denominational response. The Methodist Church has long supported the goal of inclusiveness in Church and society. However, analysis of the ability and willingness to implement that goal reveals a large gap between principle and practice. Sociologists and anthropologists always distinguish between real and ideal culture. The latter refers to ideal patterns of culture contained in laws, belief systems, and moral codes. The former refers to the observed way in which things are actually done in a particular society. Statements about the principle of the brotherhood of man and the goal of inclusiveness in Church and society corresponds to the ideal culture. The pattern of response that we have described in our analysis corresponds to the real culture. It is to be expected that there will be a gap. The important question is the extent to which initiative is being taken to utilize courses of action that are available.

(2) The degree of willingness to use economic power to implement the stated goal is indicative of the commitment to the goal. We have noted a number of important instances in which there has been an unwillingness to use economic power. Chief among them were the rejection of the requests for funds for the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs and the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches, the failure to take restrictive action against agencies of the Church that continue to segregate, and the failure to require that church extension funds be used to establish integrated community patterns.

It must be said that the threat of schism was a prominent deterrent, but the support of the Delta Ministry Program by the National Division of the Board of Missions is an indication that some action was possible despite the risk. Initiative such as this was never taken previously at the national level to test the range of possible action.

(3) The direction of the main thrust of the response must be noted. Our analysis revealed that the major thrust of the Methodist response was to the Church itself. This finding is of crucial importance for our appraisal of the Methodists and race and for illumination of the Church and social action question. The Methodist Church prides itself on its social consciousness and thinks of itself as a Church that plays a decisive role in community affairs. We recognize that the issue of race is a special problem for The Methodist Church and that findings here cannot be applied to other problem areas. Yet, what has been seen in terms of dependence on statements, use of funds, inward direction of response, and reliance on study and conferences without follow-up procedures should have a sobering effect on Methodist leaders and should lead to a reappraisal of strategies. The implications for the broader question of Church and social action are great, also. In Christ and Culture, H. Richard Niebuhr postulates a typology with five categories built around a variety of relationships between the poles of Christ and culture. One of the types, characterized by Luther, is represented by a dualist motif, in which Church and culture are essentially separated. The Church is not to impinge upon the political and economic spheres. Another type,

characterized by Calvin, is represented by a transformationist motif. In this view, the Church is to work within the world to transform it, to improve it, on the basis of the Church's understanding of Christ. The importance of this typology for our present study is that The Methodist Church avows a transformationist position, but on the issue of race, at least, operates primarily in a dualist manner. The effect of the dualism is that the Church does not change the existing patterns, and, in fact leaves them alone, thus preserving and perpetuating the status quo. Any analysis of the Church and social action must therefore penetrate beneath denominational statements and denominational self-understanding to discover what its actual relation is to the culture.

(4) The effectiveness of particular forms of action must be evaluated. In the present study, for example, we found heavy dependence on study groups and conferences designed to probe particular problems. However, there was seldom any plan for follow-up in the form of specific actions to be taken. In consequence, there was too often a great investment of time, money, and personnel that had no discernable impact on either the Church or the society. We have noted previously some questions raised by sociologists about educational efforts unaccompanied by other actions in terms of the effectiveness in changing basic patterns. Churches ought to take cognizance of available information on processes of social change.

We have already noted that the timing of various actions is an important indicator of the leadership role of the Church. If analysis of the response of The Methodist Church to other social problems revealed a similar pattern of following the lead of governmental agencies and action groups it might result in a reappraisal of procedures and allotment of funds to staff personnel for boards of social concerns at all levels, or, alternatively, a reappraisal of the self-image of the Church as a leader on social issues. The importance of such analysis for the debate on the question of the Church and social action is that determination of consistent patterns of following by denominational bodies might result in more precision in the debate. At the present dispute centers on the issue of the role of the Church as leader in changing social patterns. If it is found that the Church generally tends to follow the lead of outside forces, the debate might then shift to questions about the proper supportive role of the Church in the midst of a transitional situation.

Finally, the structure of the denominational body, or bodies, has to be considered carefully. Too often, as we have noted, commentators talk about "the Church" or "the Protestant Church." Our analysis demonstrates that one must be cautious in talking about "the denomination," and certainly talk about "the Church" in a general sense must be severely qualified. Our study of the annual conferences, the bishops, and the boards and agencies revealed widely differing types of response among the various ecclesiastical levels, and within any given level. Moreover, we discovered that over-simplified identifications in terms of geographical location fails to appreciate wide diversity that exists within ecclesiastical bodies that share similar location and history. This was most dramatically demonstrated by the analysis of the Rock River Conference and the Detroit Conference. The difference between the responses of the two may in large measure be attributed to the early appointment of an executive secretary responsible for social concerns in the Detroit Conference. As we have seen, the denomination is to some extent a collection of segmental bodies that operate with great independence, and, at times, in conflict to each other and the denominational position. Thus the Church and social action discussion must be informed by careful analysis that probes deeper than even denominational lines if we are to gain a full appreciation of possible responses at all levels and an understanding of how divergent responses will be determined.

DIVISION OF HUMAN RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
GENERAL BOARD OF CHRISTIAN SOCIAL CONCERNS
OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

APPENDIX A.

THE METHODIST BUILDING
100 MARYLAND AVENUE, NORTHEAST
WASHINGTON 2, D.C. · LINCOLN 6-1000

April 19, 1965

MEMO TO: CHAIRMEN, CONFERENCE COMMITTEES ON HUMAN RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Dear Fellow Methodists:

This Division is cooperating with the Hartford Seminary Foundation in seeking your help in a race relations survey. We are seeking to collect as much information as possible about the response of The Methodist Church in the last few years to the racial crisis in the United States. We are particularly interested in discovering in what ways the denominational position on inclusiveness in the Church and equal opportunities in the society has fomented specific projects at the conference or local church level. Critics of the churches have maintained that the response to the racial crisis on the part of the churches was slow in coming. They have maintained, further, that when the response finally came it too often took the form of pronouncements completely unrelated to church action. In order to assess the validity of such charges and to present an accurate report of Methodist action in race relations we seek your assistance.

To give us the type of information we need, we would appreciate reports of significant projects in race relations carried out by local churches, Commissions on Christian Social Concerns, or Conference Boards of Christian Social Concerns in the areas suggested in the list below. Please check yes or no for each of the categories listed. For those checked yes, please elaborate further on a separate page in as much detail as possible. Please specify the type of project undertaken, the number of people involved, the date of the project, the duration of the project, the results, the present status of the project, and to whom we might refer for more detailed information. In addition, your assessment of the response of Methodist clergy and laymen in the area would be helpful.

A self addressed envelope is provided here for your use in connection with the return of the filled out questionaire enclosed. Your cooperation in the completion of this survey will be greatly appreciated not only by the Hartford Seminary Foundation, but also by this Division.

If you have any questions about the survey please write to Dr. William W. May at the Hartford Seminary Foundation.

Sincerely yours,

Grover C. Bagby

Grover C. Bagby
Associate General Secretary

"THE RESPONSE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH TO THE RACIAL CRISIS IN THE UNITED STATES"

QUESTIONAIRE

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN TO: DR. WILLIAM W. MAY
HARTFORD SEMINARY FOUNDATION
55 ELIZABETH STREET
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06105

HAVE PROJECTS IN RACE RELATIONS BEEN CARRIED OUT BY LOCAL CHURCHES, COMMISSIONS ON CHRISTIAN SOCIAL CONCERNS, OR THE CONFERENCE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN SOCIAL CONCERNS IN THE FOLLOWING PROBLEM AREAS:

	YES	NO
1. OPEN WORSHIP AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	___	___
2. OPEN EMPLOYMENT (APPEALS TO MANAGEMENT AND/OR LABOR)	___	___
3. OPEN HOUSING PROGRAMS	___	___
4. REDUCTION OF COMMUNITY TENSIONS, COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS, AND ANY FOLLOW-UP	___	___
5. IMPROVEMENT OF THE STANDARD OF SCHOOLS IN GHETTO AREAS	___	___
6. EFFORTS TO PROMOTE SCHOOL INTEGRATION	___	___
7. EXCHANGE PROGRAMS WITH CENTRAL JURISDICTION CHURCHES OR GROUPS	___	___
8. SELECTIVE USE OF PURCHASING FUNDS TO PROMOTE JOB EQUALITY	___	___
9. SUPPORT OF THE 1964 CIVIL RIGHTS BILL	___	___
10. SUPPORT OF THE VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE IN THE SOUTH	___	___
11. PARTICIPATION IN OR SUPPORT OF LOCAL DEMONSTRATIONS	___	___
12. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	___	___

NAME ____

ADDRESS ____

ANNUAL CONFERENCE ____

JURISDICTION ____

APRIL 19, 1965

APPENDIX B.

A CHARTER OF RACIAL POLICIES

WE BELIEVE

1. We believe that God is the Father of all people and all are his children in one family.
2. We believe that the personality of every human being is sacred.
3. We believe that opportunities for fellowship and service, for personal growth, and for freedom in every aspect of life are inherent rights of every individual.
4. We believe that the visible Church of Jesus Christ must demonstrate these principles within its own organization and program.
5. We believe that The Methodist Church must build a fellowship and social order without racial barriers in every area it may touch.

WE WILL

1. Commit ourselves as individuals called by Jesus Christ to witness by word and deed to the basic rights of every person regardless of cost.
2. Unite our efforts through all groups in the church toward eliminating in The Methodist Church all forms of segregation based on race whether in basic structure or institutional life.
3. Create in local churches opportunities for inclusive fellowship and membership without restriction based on race.
4. Act with other groups and agencies to involve families in new experiences with other races and cultures.
5. Share in creative plans that challenge youth, students and young adults of all races to new understanding of the Church's mission and ministries.
6. Interpret and strengthen recruitment and employment practices of the agencies and institutions of The Methodist Church consistent with our belief in the oneness of God's family.
7. Open the facilities and services of all Methodist institutions without restriction based on race and make such policies clearly known.
8. Establish all Schools of Christian Mission and all leadership development and enrichment programs on a regional basis without restriction based on race.
9. Seek to change community patterns of racial segregation in all relationships including education, housing, voting, employment and public facilities.
10. Work for national policies that safeguard the rights of all the nation's people.
11. Support world-wide movements for basic human rights and fundamental freedoms for peoples everywhere.
12. Join with others who seek in church and community justice and freedom for all members of the family of God.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS: JOURNALS, REPORTS, MINUTES, etc.

(Some of the material included is unpublished. It is included here rather than in Section IV because of its "Official" nature.)

Annual Conferences. General Minutes of the Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church, 1960; 1964.

Board of Christian Social Concerns. "Minutes" of The General Board of Christian Social Concerns, Appendix E, Oct. 5-7, 1964. (Mimeographed.)

Board of Social Concerns. "Report" of the Interagency Consultation on Local Church Racial Inclusiveness, October 26-27, 1966. (Mimeographed.)

Board of Evangelism. A Report of the Department of Special Activities of the Board of Evangelism, (Department publication, 1963).

Board of Hospitals and Homes. 1966 Directory of Hospitals and Homes of The Methodist Church. Evanston: Board of Hospitals and Homes.

Board of Missions. Report on Consultation on The Inclusive Church, November 18-19, 1959, Gary, Indiana. Philadelphia: Department of City Work, n. d.

Board of Missions. "Race Relations and the National Division," a report for the National Division Staff Meeting, March, 1965, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (Mimeographed.)

Commission to Study the Jurisdictional System. 1956 Report to the Central Jurisdiction.

Commission on Inter-Jurisdictional Relations. The Commission to Study the Jurisdictional System. Report to the 1960 General Conference of The Methodist Church, January 6, 1960. no publisher. (Referred to as Report of the Commission of 70.)

Commission on Inter-Jurisdictional Relations. *Report and Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction,* 1964. (Referred to as Report of the Commission of 36.)

The Committee of Five. *Bridges to Racial Equality in The Methodist Church*, Report to the Central Jurisdictional Conference, 1964.

The Committee of Five. *Central Jurisdiction Speaks.* 1962.

The Committee of Five. *Creative Pursuit of An Inclusive Church.* February, 1964.

The Committee of Five. "Regional Segregation?" Petition and Brief for a Declaratory Decision, March 15, 1965.

The Committee of Five. *Study Document on Realignment of the Central Jurisdiction,* [c. December, 1962].

The Committee of Five. "Transfers and Mergers," November 2-3, 1965.

Council on World Service and Finance. *Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Council on World Service and Finance of The Methodist Church and Minutes of the Co-ordinating Council of The Methodist Church,* 1964-65.

Daily Christian Advocate, *Proceedings of the General Conference of 1964.* VII. No. 6. Pittsburgh: The Methodist Publishing House.

Doctrines and Discipline of The Methodist Church, 1964. Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1964.

Formal Fraternity, Proceedings of the General Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1872, 1874, and 1876, and of the Joint Commission of the Two Churches on Fraternal Relations, at Cape May, New Jersey, August 16-23, 1876. New York: Nelson and Phillips, n. d.

General Conference. *Journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, I. New York: Carlton and Phillips, 1855.

General Conference. *Journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, II, 1840, 1844. New York: Carlton and Phillips, 1855.

General Conference. Estes, Lud H. (ed.). *Journal of the 1944 General Conference of The Methodist Church.* Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House.

General Conference. Estes, Lud H. (ed.). *Journal of the 1948 General Conference of The Methodist Church.* Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House.

General Conference. Estes, Lud H. (ed.). *Journal of the 1952 General Conference of The Methodist Church.* Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House.

General Conference. Estes, Lud H. (ed.). *Journal of the 1956 General Conference of The Methodist Church.* Nashville: The Methodist Church.

General Conference. Moore, S. Leon T. (ed.). *Journal of the 1960 General Conference of The Methodist Church.* Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House.

Hoss, E. E. and Thomas, Frank M. (ed.). *A Record for All Agreements Concerning Fraternity and Federation Between the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and Declaration in Favor of Unification Made by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.* Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1914.

The Image of The Methodist Church in the Negro Community. A study by The Center for Research in Marketing Incorporated, for the Department of Research and Survey. Philadelphia: 1965.

Interracial Leadership Conference. *Conference on Human Relations*, a report of a conference held at First Methodist Church, Glendale, California. February 11-13, 1958. (Mimeographed.)

Interracial Leadership Conference. *Ohio Methodist Interracial Conference Report*, a report of a conference held at the Youth Center, State Fairgrounds, Columbus, Ohio. April 2-4, 1959. (Mimeographed.)

Interracial Leadership Conference. *Report of Bishops' Conference on Brotherhood*, a report of a conference held at Brooks Memorial Methodist Church, Jamaica, New York. September 25, 1956. (Mimeographed.)

Interracial Leadership Conference. *Report of Interracial Leadership Conference*, a report of a conference held at Bethune-Cookman College, Daytona Beach, Florida. September 10-11, 1957. (Mimeographed.)

Interracial Leadership Conference. *Report of Interracial Leadership Conference*, a report of a conference held at Indianapolis, Indiana. May 1-2, 1957. (Mimeographed.)

Interracial Leadership Conference. *Report of Interracial Leadership Conference*, a report of a conference held at St. Louis, Missouri. May 9-10, 1957. (Mimeographed.)

Interracial Leadership Conference. *Report of Interracial Leadership Conference*, a report of a conference held at Wesley Memorial Church, Atlanta, Georgia. January 28-29, 1957. (Mimeographed.)

Interracial Leadership Conference. *Report of Interracial Leadership Conference*, a report of a conference held at Walbrook Methodist Church, Baltimore, Maryland, December 3-4, 1956. (Mimeographed.)

Joint Commission on Unification of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. 3 Vols. New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1918.

Journals of the Detroit Conference. 1943; 1946-1965.

Journals of the New York Conference. 1946-1965.

Journals of the New York East Conference. 1946-1965.

Journals of the North Alabama Conference. 1946-1965.

Journals of the North Georgia Conference. 1946-1965.

Journals of the Rock River Conference. 1946-1965.

Journals of the Southern California-Arizona Conference. 1946-1965.

Journals of the Western North Carolina Conference. 1946-1965.

Journal of the 1964 Central Jurisdiction Conference. Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House.

Judicial Council. *Decisions of the Judicial Council of The Methodist Church,* Numbers 1-175 1940-1960. Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, n. d.

Methodist Periodical Index

Methodist Student Movement. *Minutes of the National Conference of The Methodist Student Movement*, 1960-1965.

Minutes of the Methodist Conferences Annually Held in America: From 1773 to 1813, inclusive. I. New York: Hitt and Ware, 1813.

Moe, Edward O. *Evaluation Report, Methodist Conference on Human Relations*, No publ., February, 1960.

Shippey, Frederick A. *Selected Work Documents.* Prepared for The Commission For Study and Action of the Jurisdictional System. The Methodist Church, Copyright 1960, Frederick A. Shippey.

Uniting Conference. Estes, Lud H. (ed.). *Journal of the Uniting Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Methodist Protestant Church.* New York: Methodist Publishing House, 1939.

Woman's Society of Christian Service (Later Woman's Division of Christian Service). *Annual Reports.* 1941-1965.

Woman's Society of Christian Service (Later Woman's Division of Christian Service). *Journals.* 1941-1965. (Includes Journals of Annual Meetings, Executive Committee Meetings, and Administrative Committee Meetings.)

Woman's Division of Christian Service and Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs. *Report of the Orientation Conference for the Quadrennial Program on Race Relations*, Louisville, Kentucky. The Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions and The Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs of the General Board of Christian Social Concerns, n.d.

Woman's Division of Christian Service and Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs. *Findings, of the Assignment Imperative: Mission for 1966-1968 Conference*, Frogmore, South Carolina, February 1-11, 1966. The Section of Christian Social Relations, Woman's Division, Board of Missions and the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, Board of Christian Social Concerns.

A Working Conference on the Union of American Methodism, New York: The Methodist Book Concern, n.d.

II. BOOKS

Allport, Gordon. *The Nature of Prejudice.* New York: Doubleday (Anchor Ed.), 1958.

Baker, George Claude, Jr. *An Introduction to the History of Early New England Methodism*, 1789-1839. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1941.

Ballard, Lloyd Vernor. *Social Institutions*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1936.

Bascom, H. B. *Brief Appeal to Public Opinion*. Louisville: John Early, 1848.

Bowen, Elias. *Slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church*. Auburn: William J. Moses, Printer, 1859.

Brunner, John H. *The Union of the Churches*. New York: Phillips and Hunt, n. d.

Bucke, Emory Stevens. General Editor. *The History of American Methodism.* 3 vols. New York: Abingdon Press, 1964.

Cameron, Richard M. *Methodism and Society in Historical Perspective.* Vol. I., *Methodism and Society*. New York: Abingdon, 1961.

Campbell, Ernest Q. and Pettigrew, Thomas F. *Christians in Racial Crisis: A Study of Little Rock's Ministry*. Washington, D. C.: Public Affairs Press, 1959.

Campbell, Will D. *Race and the Renewal of the Church*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962.

Christ, The Church, and Race. Woman's Division of Christian Service, 1957-58 study book.

Cranston, Earl. *Breaking Down The Walls*. New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1915.

Culver, Dwight L. *Negro Segregation in The Methodist Church*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953.

Culver, Dwight L. *We Can and We Will*. Woman's Division of Christian Service, 1961-62 study book.

DeVinne, Daniel. *The Methodist Episcopal Church and Slavery*. New York: Francis Hart, 1857.

Elliott, Charles. *Sinfulness of American Slavery*, 2 Vols. Cincinnati: Poe and Hitchcock, 1863.

Emory, John (ed.). *The Works of the Reverend John Wesley,* A.M., VI. New York: Waugh and Mason, 1832.

Farish, Hunter Dickinson. The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism 1865-1900. Richmond, Virginia: The Dietz Press, 1938.

Garber, Paul Neff. The Methodists Are One People. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1939.

Graham, J. H. The Development of Negro Leadership for the Christian Ministry. New York: National Division of the Board of Missions, 1965.

Harmon, Nolan B. The Organization of The Methodist Church. (2nd rev. ed.), Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1962.

Harmon, Nolan B. Understanding The Methodist Church. Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1961.

Harrison, William P. Methodist Union. Nashville: Publishing House Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1892.

Haygood, Atticus. Our Brother in Black: His Freedom and Future. New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1881.

Haynes, Leonard L., Jr. The Negro Community Within American Protestantism, 1619-1844. Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1953.

Hertzler, Joyce O. Social Institutions. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1929.

Hoss, E. E. Methodist Fraternity and Federation. Nashville: Publishing House Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1913.

Kelsey, George. Racism and the Christian Understanding of Man. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965.

Lee, Luther and Smith, E. The Debates of The General Conference of the M. E. Church, May, 1844. New York: Published by O. Scott, 1845.

Mathews, Donald G. Slavery and Methodism, A Chapter In American Morality, 1780-1845. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965.

McElreath, Walter. Methodist Union in the Courts. New York-Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946.

Miller, Robert Moats. *American Protestantism and Social Issues, 1919-1939*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1958.

Moberg, David O. *The Church as a Social Institution.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962.

Moore, John M. *The Long Road to Methodist Union.* New York-Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943.

Morrow, Ralph. *Northern Methodism and Reconstruction*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1956.

Muelder, Walter G. *Methodism and Society in the Twentieth Century.* Vol. II, *Methodism and Society*. New York: Abingdon, 1961.

Murray, Pauli. *States' Laws on Race and Color*. Woman's Division of Christian Service, 1951.

Neely, Bishop Thomas A. *American Methodism, Its Divisions and Unification.* New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1915.

Niebuhr, H. Richard. *Christ and Culture.* New York: Harper and Brothers, Torchbook Edition, 1956.

Northwood, L. K., and Barth, Ernest A. T. *Urban Desegregation: Negro Pioneers and Their White Neighbors.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965.

Norwood. J. N. *The Schism in The Methodist Episcopal Church, 1844: A Study of Slavery and Ecclesiastical Politics*. Alfred, New York: Alfred University Press, 1923.

Outler, Albert (ed.). *John Wesley*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Peck, George. *Slavery and the Episcopacy*. New York: Lane and Tippett, 1845.

Redford, A. H. *History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.* Nashville: A. H. Redford, 1871.

The Road to Brotherhood, a 1958 study book. General Board of Social and Economic Relations, 1959.

Schilling, S. Paul. *Methodism and Society in Theological Perspective.* Vol. III. *Methodism and Society*. New York: Abingdon, 1960.

Sellers, James. The South and Christian Ethics. New York: Association Press, 1962.

Simpson, George E. and Yinger, J. Milton. Racial and Cultural Minorities. Rev. Ed., New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958.

Spencer, Claudius B. That They May Be One. New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1915.

Stotts, Herbert and Deats, Paul. Methodism and Society: Guidelines For Strategy. Vol. IV., Methodism and Society. New York: Abingdon, 1962.

Straughn, James H. Inside Methodist Union. Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1958.

Swaney, Charles B. Episcopal Methodism and Slavery; With Sidelights on Ecclesiastical Politics. Boston: Richard G. Badger, Publisher, The Gorham Press, 1926.

Sweet, William Warren. Methodism in American History. New York: Abingdon, Rev. Ed., 1953.

Troeltsch, Ernst. The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches. New York: Harper and Brothers (Harper Torchbook edition), 1960.

Williams, Robin M., Jr. Strangers Next Door. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964.

Wilson, Robert L. and Davis, James H. The Church in the Racially Changing Community. New York: Abingdon Press, 1966.

Wilson, Robert L. and Davis, James H. Let's Get Acquainted. Philadelphia: 1965.

Wilson, Robert L. and Davis, James H. Toward a Racially Inclusive Methodist Church: A Progress Report. Philadelphia, 1966.

Wogaman, J. Philip. Methodism's Challenge in Race Relations: A Study of Strategy. Boston: Boston University Press, 1960.

III. ARTICLES AND PERIODICALS

"Adopt Race Statement," Methodist Layman, 24:25 (May, 1964).

"Aid to Race Workers," Christian Advocate, 8:24 (September 24, 1964).

"Alabama Bishops' Statement," *Christian Advocate*, 9:24 (March 25, 1965).

"All Persons May Attend Methodist Services," *Concern*, 7:15 (May 15, 1965).

Alton, Bishop Ralph T. "Methodist Institutions and the Race Problem," *Central Christian Advocate*, 139:12 (April 1, 1964).

"Antisegregation Moves North," *Central Christian Advocate*, 138:3 (August 15, 1963). (reprint.)

Bagby, G. C. "Hope for McComb-Hope for the Nation," *Concern*, 6:2 (December 15, 1964).

Bagby, G. C. "Race, Power, and Persuasion," *Christian Advocate*, 8:7 (April 9, 1964).

Bagby, G. C. "Violence and the Police: South and North," *Concern*, 7:4 (October 15, 1964).

Baker, R. E. "New Day - A New Opportunity," *Methodist Story*, 9:5 (January, 1965).

Bibbions, J. C. "Analysis of Current Nonviolence Movements," *Central Christian Advocate*, 138:4 (September 15, 1963).

Billings, P. "God-given Second Chance," *Methodist Women*, 25:14 (July-August, 1965).

"Bishop Asks Methodists to Help Ease Race Tension," *Christian Advocate*, 8:22 (July 16, 1964).

"Bishop Barred from Mississippi Worship on Resurrection Day," *Central Christian Advocate*, 139:3 (May 1, 1964).

"Bishop Calls for 'Phalanx of Freedom Riders'," *Central Christian Advocate*, 136:17 (September 15, 1961).

"Bishop Comments on Racial Stand," *Together Area News Edition* (Syracuse), 8:2 (January, 1964).

"Bishop Mathews Reports on Incident at Jackson, Mississippi, Church on Easter Sunday," *Central Christian Advocate*, 139:17 (June 1, 1964).

"Bishop, Methodists Lead Housing March," *Together Area News Edition* (Seattle), 8:1 (May, 1964).

"Bishop Sees Strong New Leadership in Race Crisis," Christian Advocate, 9:23 (May 20, 1965).

"Bishops Issue Call," Central Christian Advocate, 136:3 (February 15, 1961).

"Bishops Join in Law and Order Plea," Central Christian Advocate, 138:20 (March 15, 1963).

"Bishops Speak on Race Relations," Central Christian Advocate, 138:11 (June 15, 1963).

"Bishops Support Decision of the Supreme Court," Concern, 5:14 (July 15, 1963).

"Bishops Support Supreme Court Ruling," Central Christian Advocate, 138:15 (October 1, 1963).

"Bishops, Theology Professors Denied Worship in Jackson," Together, 8:4 (June, 1964).

Boyle, Sarah Patton. "Why Demonstration," Methodist Story, 9:57 (May 1965). (review.)

Boyle, Sarah Patton. "Why Demonstrations," Church and Race, August, 1964.

Brockway, A. R. "We Shall Overcome," Concern, 7:4 (April 1, 1965).

Bron, I. C. "Race, Culture and History," Adult Student, 23:6 (January-March, 1964).

"CSC Executive Committee Supported March," Concern, 7:15 (April 15, 1965).

"Call for Study of Boards," Methodist Layman, 24:20 (March, 1964).

"Christian Social Concerns Upholds 'Right of Protest' in Discipline," Central Christian Advocate, 139:14 (April 15, 1964).

"Church Clarifies Its Stand on Race," Central Christian Advocate, 139:8 (June 15, 1964).

"Church Maps Strategy for Fall Housing," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (San Francisco), 8:5 (October, 1964).

"Church Segregation Denounced by Bishops," Central Christian Advocate, 139:3 (January 1, 1964).

"Churches Ease Tensions with Community Program," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (New York), 8:1 (October, 1964).

"Commend Brotherly Spirit," Central Christian Advocate, 138:10 (January 15, 1963).

"Condemns Racism," Methodist Layman, 24:24 (February, 1964).

"Conference Adopts Statements on Race," Central Christian Advocate, 139:22 (January 1, 1964).

"The Conferences Voted on Transfers," Central Christian Advocate, 140:3 (August 1, 1965).

"Consumer Bulletin FHA Mortgage Insurance," Washington, D. C.: Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1966.

"Council of Bishops Issues Message," World Outlook, 25:43 (June, 1965).

"Council of Bishops Makes Covenant for a New Age," Together, 9:7 (July, 1965).

Crouch, William C. "Bishops and the Racial Question," Plumb Line, March, 1964. (Contains a letter from Bishop Harmon, dated December 6, 1963.)

"Dakotas Pastors Help in Mississippi," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (Dakotas), 8:1 (October, 1964).

Davis, A. T. "Pulpit Speaks on Race," Methodist Story, 9:46 (June, 1965).

"Deplores Sit-outs," Concern, 5:15 (December 15, 1963).

"Dissolution Proposal," Central Christian Advocate, 140:3 (November 1, 1965).

"Drew Faculty Challenges the 70," Concern, March 11, 1960. (Also in a mimeographed form distributed by the Drew University Public Relations Office.)

Fair, H. L. "Progress in Race Relations," Christian Action, 20:37 (February, 1965).

"Fair-housing Service Arouses Community," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (San Fransisco), 8:8 (October, 1964).

"First Grants Made from Witness Relief Fund," Methodist Story, 9:42 (March, 1965).

"Five Receive Grants From Racial Relief Fund," Concern, 7:15 (February 15, 1965).

"Four Methodist Bishops Laud Court's 'Sit-in' Decisions," Central Christian Advocate, 138:20.

"From Los Angeles Churches: A Declaration of Guilt, a Determination to Act," Together, 9:3 (November, 1965).

"Galloway Methodist Church Refuses to Admit Two Methodist Bishops on Easter Sunday," Central Christian Advocate, 139:14 (May 15, 1964).

"Georgia Bishop Asks Open Worship," World Outlook, 26:41 (October, 1965).

Golden, C. F. "Most Important Issues Facing Methodists Today: Methodism's Dilemma in Race Relations," Adult Student, 20:2 (December, 1961).

Goodman, D. "Churches and Civil Rights," Central Christian Advocate, 140:5 (October 15, 1965).

Goodsen, Bishop Kenneth. Letter addressed to Alabama and West Florida Methodists, The Christian Advocate, March 23, 1965.

Harris, R. "Students, Selma and the Mission of the Church," Methodist Woman, 25:16 (July-August, 1965).

Hart, J. R. "Churches Lose California Battle" (a special report), Christian Advocate, 8:23 (December 31, 1964).

Harvey, C. C. "Freedom Riders, Please Go Away," Central Christian Advocate, 136:5 (September 16, 1961).

Harvey, Mrs. Martin L. Letter to the Editor, Christian Century, Vol. LXXXII, Number 51, (December 22, 1965).

Haywood, J. W., Sr. "After the Next Step, What?" Central Christian Advocate, 140:4 (February 15, 1965).

"Here is the Story of How One Methodist Church Reacted to the Los Angeles Riot," *Together Area News Edition* (TANE) (Los Angeles), 9:2 (October, 1965).

Heschel, A. J. "Religious Basis of Equality of Opportunity," *Adult Teacher*, 19:2 (November, 1965). (reprint.)

Hill, S. S. "Southern Protest and Racial Integration," *Junior Religious Life*, 33:421 (Summer, 1964). (reprint.)

Howard, T. J. "Racial Issue Before Methodism," *Central Christian Advocate*, 139:5 (February 12, 1964).

"Inclusive Church," *World Outlook*, 24:5 (June, 1964).

"Integration Resolution Rejected," *Christian Advocate*, 9:23 (July 15, 1965).

"Integrating Methodism," Editorial. *Christian Century*, January 5, 1966.

"Interracial Team Will Work With Campus MSM," *Central Christian Advocate*, 139:15 (August, 1964).

"Jackson Church Bishop Breaks Color Bar," *Christian Advocate*, 9:21 (November 18, 1965).

"Jackson Mississippi Church Breaks Color Bar," *Christian Advocate*, November 18, 1965.

"Judicial Council Gets Boundary Appeal," *World Outlook*, 25:48 (March, 1965).

"Judicial Council Rules on Race," *World Outlook*, 25:44 (June, 1965).

"Kansas Religious Leaders Urge Civil Rights Legislation," *Together Area News Edition* (TANE) (Kansas), 8:4 (June, 1964).

Kiely, H. "Where were Methodists at the March?" *Concern*, 5:12 (October 15, 1963).

Kiely, H. C. "Judgment and Grace in Selma," *Concern*, 7:6 (April 1, 1965).

Kirk, W. A. "Distinctively Connectional," *Concern*, January 1-15, 1966. (reprint.)

Kirk, W. A. "Modify Church Law," *Concern*, 6:6 (April 15, 1964).

Kirk, W. A. "Responsible Use of Social Power by the Church in Race Relations," Concern, 5:8 (June 1, 1963). (reprint.)

Kirkpatrick, D. "Methodist Church and Race," Adult Student, 22:6 (February, 1963).

Kline, Lawrence O. "The Negro in the Unification of American Methodism," Paper presented to Church History Club, Drew University, March 17, 1964. (Also in The Drew Gateway, Spring, 1964.)

Littell, F. H. "Methodists and the Moment of Truth," Concern, 5:10 (September 15, 1963).

"Looking at the Other Side of Church Inclusiveness," Central Christian Advocate, 140:3 (July 1, 1965).

Lord, Bishop John Wesley. "In Defense of Demonstrations," Together, 9:12 (August, 1965).

"Louisiana Church Open to all," Concern, 5:15 (October 1, 1963).

"Louisville Conference Sparks Race Program," Methodist Orientation Conference on Race Relations, Concern, 3:15 (April 15, 1961).

Luckhard, M. C. "Reconciliation and Racial Tension," Methodist Teacher, 2:6 (February 11, 1965).

"MSM and Church in the World," Methodist Story, 9:45 (March, 1965).

"MSM Backs Civil Rights," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (San Francisco), 8:2 (October, 1964).

"MSM Seeks Race Accord," Christian Advocate, 8:23 (July 2, 1964).

"Mandates for Action,". Leaflet prepared by the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs.

"March on Pittsburgh?" World Outlook, 24:6 (April, 1964).

"McComb Methodists Aid Negro Rights," Christian Advocate, 8:24 (December 3, 1964).

"The Message". Methodist Conference on Human Relations. Chicago: Conference Office, n.d. (Brochure.)

"The Message." The Second Methodist Conference on Human Relations. Washington, D.C.: Conference Office, n.d. (Brochure.)

"Methodism's Symbol of Racial Segregation: the Central Jurisdiction Implement Amendment IX," *Concern*, 6:6 (April 15, 1964).

"Methodist Bishops and Mississippi," *Concern*, 5:16 (December 1, 1963).

"Methodist Bishops Voice Protest," *Central Christian Advocate*, 138:3 (January 15, 1963).

"The Methodist Church and Race." Published jointly by the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs and the Woman's Division of Christian Service, September, 1962. (booklet.)

"Methodist Churches Serve as Freedom Schools in Boston School Stayout," *Together Area News Edition* (TANE) (Boston), 8:1 (May, 1964).

"Methodist Conference on Human Relations," *Central Christian Advocate*, 138:3 (October 1, 1963); 138:6 (November 1, 1963).

"Methodist Leaders Condemn World-wide Racial Injustice," *Central Christian Advocate*, 138:12 (November 1, 1963).

"Methodist Magazine Decries Attacks on 'Freedom Riders'," *Central Christian Advocate*, 136:16 (August 15, 1961).

"Methodists Adopt Race Equality Statement," *Together Area News Edition* (TANE) (Boston), 8:1 (April, 1964).

"Methodists Back Freedom Democrats of Mississippi," *Christian Advocate*, 8:23 (August 13, 1964).

"Methodists for Church Renewal Plans Witness in Pittsburgh," *Christian Advocate*, 8:23 (March 26, 1964).

"Methodists in the Midst of Voting-rights Struggle," *Together*, 9:3 (June, 1965).

"Ministers Preach Rights," *Together Area News Edition* (TANE) (San Francisco), 8:8 (October, 1964).

"Methodists Speak." A report on legislation by the 1964 General Conference. Pamphlet by The General Board of Christian Social Concerns.

"Methodists to Work for Amendment Defeat," *Together Area News Edition* (TANE) (Los Angeles), 8:1 (August, 1964).

"Methodists Witness for Civil Rights," *Together Area News Edition* (TANE) (Minnesota), 9:1 (May, 1965).

Middleton, W. V. "Challenge in Changing Times in National Missions," *World Outlook,* 51:14 (April, 1961).

"Mississippi Bishop Answers Dissident Petitions," *World Outlook,* 25:44 (August, 1965).

"Mississippi Churchmen State a Position," *Central Christian Advocate*, 140:3 (July 15, 1965).

"Mississippi Layman Pleads for Unity," *Christian Advocate,* 9:24 (February 25, 1965.

"Mississippi Learns the Hard Way," *Central Christian Advocate,* 138:3 (July 15, 1963).

"Mississippi Methodism Refreshed," *Central Christian Advocate*, 138:3 (February 15, 1963).

"Mississippi Ministers, Laymen Speak Out," *Methodist Laymen,* 23:22 (February, 1963).

"Mississippi Summer Project," *Together*, 8:16 (October, 1964).

"Mississippians Take Stand," *Central Christian Advocate*, 138:17 (February 15, 1963).

Moore, N. W., Jr. "Freedom Riders," *Central Christian Advocate*, 136:13 (August 1, 1961). (reprint.)

"More Inclusive Church," *Central Christian Advocate*, 138:10 (March 15, 1963).

Muelder, Walter. "Methodism and Segregation: A Case Study," *Christianity and Crisis*, Vol. XX, No. 5, (April 4, 1960).

Murphy, Bonneau P. "Developing a Strategy," *The Methodist Story*, June, 1966.

"Name Bishop Chairman of State Civil Rights Group," *Together Area News Edition* (TANE) (Dakotas), 8:3 (April, 1964).

"Negro Churches Join Kansas Conference," *Together Area News Edition* (TANE) (Kansas), 8:1 (March, 1964).

"Negro Conferences Dissolved in the Northeast," *Together*, 9:1 (June, 1965).

"Negro Movement," Concern, 5:3 (September 15, 1963).

"Negro Pastor Assigned to Integrated Church," Concern, 5:15 (December 15, 1963).

"Negro to High Church Post," Christian Advocate, 8:23 (May 7, 1964).

"One Integration Resolution Rejected, Another Approved," Together, 9:8 (September, 1965).

"Organize for Quadrennium" (Committee on Inter-Jurisdictional Relations), Methodist Story, 8:38 (November, 1964).

"Our World Service" column. Church School, July, 1966.

"Outstanding Record: 30 Sign Race Statement," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (Los Angeles), 8:6 (February, 1964).

"Overcoming Prejudice and Injustice Is a Must," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (Pennsylvania), 8:1 (March, 1964).

Palmer, Bishop Everett W. "One Witness... One World!" Address to Pacific Northwest Annual Conference, June 14, 1964. (reprint.)

"Pastors Get Relief Aid from Racial Witness Fund," Central Christian Advocate, 140:17 (February 1, 1965).

Phifer, L. B. "Progress in Race Relations for the Planning Committee (of older youth's evening meetings)," Christian Action, 20:59 (February, 1965).

Powell, M. B. "Negroes in Methodist History," Christian Advocate, 9:9 (March 11, 1965).

"Quadrennial Program on Race," Methodist Orientation Conference on Race Relations, Concern, 3:19 (June 1, 1961).

"Race Committee Begins Work," Together, 9:16 (October, 1965).

"Race Conference Recommends Actions," World Outlook, 51:47 (May, 1961).

"Race Held Major Challenge to US Protestantism," Concern, 7:15 (March 15, 1965).

"Race Relations Delegates Suggest Specific Actions," Methodist Story, 5:51 (June, 1961).

"Racial Witness Relief Fund." Church School, 18:3 (February, 1965).

"Racial Witness Relief Fund," *Methodist Story*, 8:45 (November, 1964).

"Racial Witness Relief Fund," *Methodist Story*, 9:44 (October, 1965).

Ragan, R. "Methodists and Residential Segregation of the Negro," *Concern*, 5:4 (July 15, 1963).

Raines, Bishop Richard C. "Church Must Lead in Civil Rights Fight," *Together Area News Edition* (TANE) (Indiana), 9:2 (May, 1965).

Raines, Bishop Richard C., Jr. "On Bishop Mathews and Race" (reply to Bishops Speak on Race by J. K. Mathews), *Christian Advocate*, 8:13 (February 27, 1964).

Regan, J. R. "Integrated Southern Church," *Christian Advocate*, 9:9 (April 22, 1965).

"Resolution on Church Action for Racial Justice," *Central Christian Advocate*, 138:5 (August 1, 1963). (reprint.)

Saunders, A. D. "On Civil Disobedience," *Methodist Story*, 9:44 (June, 1965). (review.)

Schooler, R. "Missionary's Witness and Civil Rights," *Christian Action*, 20:6 (June, 1964). (reprint.)

"Seek Better Racial Climate" (MSM), *Together*, 9:8 (July, 1965).

"Seek Hospital Integration," *Central Christian Advocate*, 140:15 (February, 1965).

"Sees Lack of Communication as Obstacle To Integration," *Together*, 8:6 (March, 1964).

"Segregated Worship Hit," *Concern*, 7:15 (September 15, 1965).

"Segregated Worship Hit," *Central Christian Advocate*, 140:13 (October 15, 1965).

"Segregation To Be Out After Merger with EUB," *Central Christian Advocate*, 140:14 (October 1, 1965).

The Seattle Times, Saturday, March 7, 1964.

"Share in Race Relief Fund," *Together*, 9:8 (March, 1965).

Smith, Bishop John Owen. "Americus Aftermath Urges No Racial Bars," Christian Advocate, September 23, 1965.

Smith, Bishop John Owen. "Problem of Race is Deeper than Integration," Christian Advocate, 5:11 (Nobember 23, 1961).

Smith, R. L. "If we Were to Join Again," Central Christian Advocate, 138:6 (March 1, 1963).

"Southeastern Bishops Issue Statements," World Outlook, 25:47 (May, 1965).

"Southeastern Bishops Plan Action on Race," World Outlook, 51:47 (May, 1961).

"Southeastern Bishops Speak," Methodist Story, 9:40 (June, 1965).

Southeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops. A statement. Contact-Concern, Vol. 2:8, (August 15, 1960).

Southern Jurisdiction Bishops take Stand," Christian Advocate, 9:24 (April, 1965).

"Statement on Race Issue by Bishop," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (Nashville), 8:4 (March, 1964).

"Statement on Religion and Human Relations," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (Arkansas), 8:1 (January, 1964).

"Statement Urges Peace in McComb Race Turmoil," Together, 9:8 (February, 1965).

"Statements, 1965," Concern, 7:9 (December 1, 1965).

Stazesky, Richard C. and Taylor, Winston. "Suggestions for Successful Mergers: Central Jurisdiction Annual Conferences with Annual Conferences of Geographical Jurisdictions." Dept. of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, Board of Christian Social Relations, n. d.

Stevens, F. B. "Sign of Change in Mississippi Methodism," Concern, 7:8 (September, 1965).

Stevens, Thelma. "Methodist Church and Race," Methodist Woman, 24:26 (May, 1964).

"Students to be in 10 Summer Projects," World Outlook, 25:42 (May, 1965).

"Sunday of Strife in Selma and its Aftermath," Together, 9:7 (May, 1965).

"Thirty-two Witness for Civil Rights in Alabama," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (Chicago), 9:1 (June, 1965).

Thomas, J. S. "Steps Toward an Inclusive Church," Concern, 6:4 (February 15, 1964).

"Three Interpret Church's Role in Civil Rights," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (Indiana) 9:1 (February, 1965).

Tinnin, J. H. "To Miss the Point of Selma," Christian Advocate, 9:16 (June 3, 1965).

"To Pursue These Goals," a pamphlet containing a plan of action on race for Michigan Methodism growing out of a meeting held November 5-7, 1965, distributed throughout Michigan with a cover letter from Bishop Loder, n. d.

"Twelve Jailed in Mississippi for Appearance at Church and Sunday School," Concern, 5:15 (November 1, 1963).

"Two Conferences Integrated," Christian Advocate, 9:24 (June 3, 1965).

"Urges Some Rightists Be Investigated: Lauds Poise of Religious Demonstrators," Central Christian Advocate, 139:12 (November 1, 1964).

"Urges Reconciliation," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (Illinois), 9:2 (August, 1965).

"Virginia Methodists Invite Negroes to Join Conference," Concern, 7:15 (July 15, 1965).

Wall, J. M. "Southeastern Jurisdiction Takes Tentative Step" (special report), Christian Advocate, 8:24 (July 30, 1964).

Wall, J. M. "Toward Inclusive Church in South: Honest Encounter Builds Hope," Christian Advocate, 9:24 (December 30, 1965).

Ward, A. D. "By What Authority?" Methodist Story, 8:27 (December, 1964).

Ward, A. D. "Lessons from the Civil Rights Movement," Concern, 7:7 (April 1, 1965).

Ward, W. R. "Methodist Church and Race," Together Area News Edition (TANE) (Syracuse), 8:1 (February, 1964).

Watkins, Bishop William T. "Methodism's Present Task: A Southern View," Motive, March, 1961.

"What Do We Mean by 'Inclusive'?" Methodist Story, 7:3 (January, 1963).

Winston, K. "Our Church's Symbol of Segregation," Class Mate, 72:5 (July, 1965).

"Work Toward Integration," Methodist Story, 9:37 (June, 1965).

"Workshop Improves Race Relations," Central Christian Advocate, 140:13 (April 1, 1965).

IV. UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL

A. Dissertations, Pamphlets, Addresses, Sermons, etc.

"All Persons...Are Proper Candidates..." A brief prepared by Grover Bagby of the Division of Human Relations and Leon Adkins of the Division of the Local Church of the Board of Education. Submitted to the Judicial Board on behalf of Secretarial Council of The Interboard Commission on The Local Church. (no publ., n. d., 70pp.)

Board of Education. "Statement about the Use of Pictures of Persons of Various Races in Our Publications." A guideline statement formulated by the General Secretary of the Editorial Division and his staff. (Mimeographed, n. d.).

Dabbs, James M. Address to Church History Club, Drew University, Spring, 1964.

Dennison, Doris P. File in folder on Division of the Local Church, Adult Department, MESTA files, Boston University.

Drew University. "Minority Statement on the Report of the Commission for Study and Action Concerning the Jurisdictional System," Drew University Public Relations Office, n. d.

Eleazer, R. B. File in folder on Division of the Local Church, Adult Department, MESTA files, Boston University.

Garrison, Bishop Edwin R. "American Christians and The Colored People," a sermon delivered at the South Dakota Annual Conference session, 1963.

Holloway, Bishop Fred G. Address to leaders of the West Virginia Conference at a special meeting called by the bishop, n. d.

Hunt, Bishop Earl G., Jr. "Perspectives on Western North Carolina Methodism," an address delivered at Western North Carolina Conference, June 8, 1966.

Johnson, Henry M. "The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Education of Southern Negroes, 1862-1900." Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Yale University, 1939.

Kirk, W. Astor. "a clear and worthy VIEW." Statement before the Judicial Council of The Methodist Church, October 21, 1965.

Kirk, W. Astor. "The Central Jurisdiction Problem," address before the Second Methodist Conference on Human Relations, Chicago, August 26-30, 1963. (Printed and distributed.)

Leiffer, Murray H. "The Episcopacy in the Present Day," Part IV, "The Study of the General Superintendency of The Methodist Church," prepared for the Co-ordinating Council of The Methodist Church. August, 1963. (Mimeographed.)

Lord, Bishop John Wesley. "Civil Rights and the American Negro," n. d.

Lord, Bishop John Wesley. "Handling the Conflict," address to the Human Relations Conference, Metropolitan Memorial Methodist Church, Washington, D. C., October 17, 1964.

Mathews, Bishop James K. "Easter in Jackson," n. d.

Palmer, Bishop Everett W. Statement made in a meeting with Church leaders on the National and World Level in respect of Church and Race, April, 1965. (Released by his office under that heading, no publisher indicated).

Palmer, Bishop Everett W. Suggestions for "A Day of Penitence and Prayer for Freedom and Justice," sent to lay leaders and pastors from the Cabinet, March 12, 1965.

Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Central Jurisdiction, as passed. (Pamphlet distributed after the General Conference).

Proposed Amendments to the Plan of Action by three members of the Central Jurisdiction to the executive committee of the Commission of 36, April 15, 1964. Proposal 4.

Raines, Bishop Richard C. "Methodist Mission and Race," delivered at Board of Missions Dinner at the 1964 General Conference, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, May 1, 1964.

"A Statement Concerning the Need for Special Methodist Funds for Race Relations," April 22, 1964. (Mimeographed statement supplied by the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs.)

Statement of the Council of Bishops of The Methodist Church. Adopted November 13, 1963, Detroit Michigan. (Mimeographed.)

Walton, Aubrey G. "Attempts Toward Unification of the Methodist Episcopal Church and The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1865-1926." Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Duke University, 1931.

B. Letters

Cover letter from Gerald L. Clapsaddle, Associate General Secretary of the Joint Commission on Education and Cultivation to Church leaders at all levels of the Church. November, 1966.

Form letter from J. Edward Carothers, Associate General Secretary, National Division of the Board of Missions. March 21, 1966.

Letter from Grover C. Bagby, Associate General Secretary, Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs, August 18, 1965.

Letter from Charles A. Britton, Jr., Vice-President in charge of Personnel and Public Relations Division of The Methodist Publishing House. November 3, 1966.

Letter from Gerald L. Clapsaddle, Associate General Secretary of the Joint Commission on Education and Cultivation, and Myron Wicke, General Secretary of the Division of Higher Education of the Board of Education, to the staff of the Morris County Project, June, 1966.

Letter from Bishop F. Gerald Ensley of the Ohio West Area. May 24, 1966.

Letter from D. R. Fletcher, Director, Section of Church Extension, National Division of the Board of Missions. November 28, 1966.

Letter from Bishop Eugene M. Frank of the Missouri Area. June 23, 1966.

Letter from Bishop Eugene M. Frank to former members of the Central West Annual Conference in Missouri, February 8, 1966.

Letter from Bishop Edwin R. Garrison of the Dakotas Area. June 6, 1966.

Letter from Robert L. Gildea, Director of Public Relations and Communications of the Indiana Area. July 7, 1966.

Letter from Bishop Paul Hardin, Jr., of the South Carolina Area. July 6, 1966.

Letter From Bishop Fred G. Holloway of the West Virginia Area. June 21, 1966.

Letter from Claire C. Hoyt, General Secretary of the Board of Pensions. December 23, 1966.

Letter from Bishop Earl G. Hunt of the Charlotte Area. June 27, 1966.

Letter from D. Trigg James, Recording Secretary and Administrative Secretary, Commission on Interjurisdictional Relations. November 15, 1966.

Letter from George H. Jones, Director, Department of Area and Conference Evangelism of the Board of Evangelism. May 19, 1966.

Letter from Bishop Francis E. Kearns of the Ohio East Area. August 3, 1966.

Letter from Bishop Dwight E. Loder of the Michigan Area to all Pastors and Administrators of Agencies in the Detroit Conference. March 31, 1966.

Letter from Bonneau P. Murphy, Assistant General Secretary, Section of Church Extension, Division of National Missions, Board of Missions. June 10, 1966.

Letter from Bonneau P. Murphy to the Members of the Committee on Church Extension. June 16, 1966.

Letter from Bishop T. Otto Nall of the Minnesota Area. May 31, 1966.

Letter to Lovick Pierce, President and Publisher, The Methodist Publishing House. October 20, 1966.

Letter from Bishop Kenneth W. Pope of the Dallas-Fort Worth Area. June 30, 1966.

Letter from Mrs. George W. Reis, Secretary to Bishop Palmer of the Seattle Area. May 25, 1966.

Letter from Bishop Roy H. Short, Louisville Area. June 3, 1966.

Letter from Bishop O. Eugene Slater of the San Antonio-Northwest Texas Area. July 1, 1966.

Letter from Thelma Stevens, Assistant General Secretary, Section of Christian Social Relations. August 17, 1965.

Letter from Walter N. Vernon, Administrative Associate and Editor, General Publications, Editorial Division of the Board of Education. May 27, 1966.

Letter from Bishop Lance Webb of the Illinois Area. June 3, 1966.

Letter from Myron F. Wicke, General Secretary of the Division of Higher Education of the Board of Education. May 26, 1966.

Letters from Detroit Conference Board of Social Concerns to Methodist pastors and Administrators of Methodist agencies in the Detroit Conference. April 4, April 8, and April 14, 1966.

Pastoral letter by Bishop Everett W. Palmer to Methodists of the Seattle Area. October 23, 1963.

C. Interviews

Interview with Grover C. Bagby, Associate General Secretary, Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs. January, 1964.

Interview with Mary Lou Barnwell, Assistant General Secretary, Section of Home Fields of the National Division of the Board of Missions. December 13, 1966.

Interview with Peggy Billings, staff member of the Section of Christian Social Relations. December 13, 1966.

Interview with Gerald L. Clapsaddle, General Secretary of the Interboard Commission on the Local Church. November 17, 1965.

Interview with Bishop James K. Mathews. December 10, 1965, Boston, Massachusetts.

Interview with Ernest V. May, Director, Department of City Work, Section of Home Fields, National Division of the Board of Missions. November 17, 1965.

Interview with Ernest V. May, Director, Department of City Work, Section of Home Fields, National Division of the Board of Missions. December 13, 1966.

Interview with Robert Spike, Director of the Commission on Religion and Race, National Council of Churches. December 20, 1965.

Interview with Thelma Stevens, Assistant General Secretary, Section of Christian Social Relations. November 17, 1965.

Interview with Thelma Stevens in conjunction with the preparation of four volume study on Methodism and Society by some members of the Boston University Faculty under the direction of Nils Ehrenstrom. April 8, 1958.

Interview with Carl Strange, Chairman of the Michigan Conference Board of Christian Social Concern. July 13, 1965, Muskegon, Michigan.

Interview with Walter Vernon by Herbert Stotts, July 29, 1959, Methodist Social Thought and Action (MESTA) files, Boston University.

D. Questionnaire Responses

Questionnaire Response from William O. Byrd, Rocky Mountain Conference, Western Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from George P. Carter, California-Nevada Conference, Western Jruisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Duncan A. Clark, North Mississippi Conference, Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Robert S. Clark, Baltimore Conference, Northeast Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from A. C. Epps, Georgia Conference, Central Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from David K. Fison, Ketchikan, Alaska, Alaska Mission.

Questionnaire Response from W. Sharon Florer, Kentucky Conference, Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from John C. Garvin, West Pennsylvania Conference, Northeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from William Gorden, New England Southern Conference, Northeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Mrs. Martin L. Harvey, Mississippi Conference, Central Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Maurice E. Hoover, Philadelphia Conference, Northeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Henry N. Horfon, Holston Conference, Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Clifford Ingram, Tennessee Conference, Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from David E. Kemberling, Central Pennsylvania Conference, Northeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Mrs. L. B. Kilpatrick, Louisiana Conference, South Central Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Eugene L. Lowry, Missouri West Conference, South Central Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Frank Lucia, Peninsula Conference, Northeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from James H. Nates, South Carolina Conference, Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from James E. Nolan, Montana Conference, Western Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from J. Douglas Parker, Detroit Conference, North Central Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Alan J. Davis, North East Ohio Conference, North Central Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Russell J. Peppe, Maine Conference, Northeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Grandison M. Phelps, Jr., Southern California-Arizona Conference, Western Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Frank L. Scott, Alabama-West Florida Conference, Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Woodrow Smith, Little Rock Conference, South Central Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Richard C. Williams, New York Conference, Northeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Travis Williams, North Arkansas Conference, South Central Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from H. Travis Woodward, North Georgia Conference, Southeastern Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Trinity Methodist Church, 1345 South 16th, Lincoln, Nebraska, Nebraska Conference, South Central Jurisdiction.

Questionnaire Response from Willard A. Zellmer, Pacific Northwest Conference, Western Jurisdiction.

E. Misc.

MESTA files. The four volume work Methodism and Society was a product of a long study undertaken by the faculty at Boston University Theological School. Their very extensive files are maintained at Boston University under the name MESTA, Methodist Social Thought and Action.

News release on conference mergers in Missouri, from Commission on Public Relations and Methodist Information. June 20, 1966.

News Release, Nashville, Tennessee, n. d., in files of Woman's Division of Christian Service, New York, New York.

Telephone Conversation with Gerald L. Clapsaddle. December 12, 1966.